

Mohammad Ebn-e Monavvar

**The Secrets
of God's
Mystical
Oneness**

[*Asrār Al-Towhīd*]



Translated with Notes
and Introduction by
John O' Kane

**THE SECRETS OF GOD'S
MYSTICAL ONENESS**



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General Editor
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THE SECRETS OF GOD'S MYSTICAL ONENESS

or

The Spiritual Stations of Shaikh Abu Sa'id

[*ASRĀR AL-TOWḤID*]

[*fi Maqāmāt al-Šeyḵ Abi Sa'id*]

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CONTENTS

Foreword by E. Yarshater	3
Acknowledgements	5
Translator's Introduction	7
 Author's Introduction	 61
 Book One. On the Beginning of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's Mystic Career	 75
 Book Two. On the Middle Period of our Shaikh's Life	 133
Chapter One. Accounts of our Shaikh's Miracles	133
Chapter Two. Accounts Containing an Instructive Point	297
Anecdotes and Instructive Points	365
Chapter Three. Containing Some of the Shaikh's Instructive sayings	427
Prayers	497
Letters of our Shaikh	505
Scattered Verses	511
 Book Three. Concerning the End of our Shaikh's Life	 521
Chapter One. On the Shaikh's Final Recommendations	521
Chapter Two. Concerning the Circumstances of the Death of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id	531
Chapter Three. Concerning Some of the Shaikh's Miracles which Appeared after his Death	539
 Translator's Notes	 581
 Index of Names	
Persons	651
Place Names	660
Groups	664
Books	665

FOREWORD

Abu Sa'id of Mehna (Meyhana), whose life and times are the subject of the biography translated here, was a brilliant Sufi mystic (A.D. 967-1049), who lived in the eastern Persian province of Khorasan. He profoundly influenced generations of Sufis and left an indelible mark on Persian poetry as well. After undergoing for nearly forty years the strictest ascetic discipline under the guidance of his Sufi mentors in various towns and preparing himself for the Sufi way of life, he emerged as a charismatic spiritual leader, one of the most renowned of his time. Eventually he returned to his birthplace, Mehna, where he built a hospice and devoted himself to guiding his increasing circle of disciples and followers.

The focal point of Abu Sa'id's teaching was the necessity for mastering the inner enemy, the self, which in the Sufi view is the source of all pride and moral blindness, the main hindrance to devoting oneself to the higher purposes of life and the love of God. Although he himself had experienced harsh training and severe self-mortification, his own teaching was marked by a pious but relaxed enjoyment of life, sometimes even with a touch of antinomian liberty. His vision of truth and his somewhat unorthodox attitude often excited the animosity of rigid religious leaders, but such opposition did not discourage people from flocking to hear his sermons and supporting his hospice. There, listening to plaintive music and recitations of lyric poetry and engaging in Sufi dances, his devotees sought to achieve ecstasy. It was he, more than any other figure, who introduced mystical sentiments into Persian lyric poetry, which thenceforth became also a vehicle for the expression of divine love and Sufi thought. After his death Abu Sa'id's fame and influence continued to grow, and his career came to be recognized as a major landmark in the history of Persian Sufism. Several shrines, in Persia and elsewhere, have been claimed as his tomb.

Much of Abu Sa'id's reputation is owing to *Asrār al-Towhīd*, the biography compiled by his descendant, Moḥammad

Ebn-e Monavvar in the late twelfth century. As the late Gholām-Hosayn Yusofi pointed out, Ebn-e Monavvar's work has done for the fame of Abu Sa'īd what James Boswell's biography did for that of Samuel Johnson. It is replete with anecdotes and sayings that reflect Abu Sa'īd's vision of life and his style of Sufi teaching. Many of his miraculous deeds are recounted (a common feature of Islamic hagiographies), and his extraordinary penetration into other people's minds is described. The book is also one of the gems of Persian prose literature.

John O'Kane embarked on the translation of *Asrār al-Towḥid* for the Persian Heritage Series in the mid-1970s, but other engagements and developments delayed completion of the project. Among the latter were the publication of Professor Fritz Meier's important monograph, *Abū Sa'īd-i Abū'l Ḥayr: Wirklichkeit und Legende* (Acta Iranica, 1979), with findings that had to be taken into account, and the appearance of a new and augmented edition of the Persian text by Professor M. R. Shafi'i Kadakani (1987), based on more authentic manuscripts than had been available before and with extensive annotation. These developments occasioned a complete revision of the translation. Mr. O'Kane's perseverance in this great labor of love has borne fruit, making this major work of Persian mysticism available to English-speaking readers for the first time. It will open a new dimension for all students of religion, as well as for those specifically concerned with Islamic mysticism and Persian literature.

Ehsan Yarshater
General Editor

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Over the years many people have given me help and useful suggestions with regard to the present translation but I would particularly like to thank Professor Herman Landolt for his comments at an early stage of the work, as well as Professor Hamid Algar for his having read the whole translation and suggested numerous improvements. However, above all I feel I owe special gratitude to Professor Fritz Meier. His magisterial works on Sufism are indispensable to anyone working in the field of Islamic religious history, and of course I particularly profited from his exhaustive scholarly study of the life of Shaikh Abu Sa'id. Moreover, on a personal level he has shown unlimited patience and generosity in answering a host of detailed questions I put to him concerning the Persian text. And I would also like to acknowledge my debt to Šafi'i-Kadkani whose improved edition of the *Asrār al-Towhīd* with its extensive notes and indices was a great help to me in preparing the present translation. And finally, I wish to thank Hans Theunissen of the University of Utrecht for the endless hours he spent initiating me into the mysteries of computer technology.

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The *Asrār al-Towhīd*, a Persian hagiography compiled in the late twelfth century, presents a biographical portrait of Shaikh Abu Saʿīd which stands out as one of the most unusual and engaging images of a Sufi Shaikh in the history of Islamic mysticism. Much ingenuity has gone into fabricating miraculous feats in his biographical legend, and his pronounced antinomian character allows him scope to behave quite outrageously and with great panache in the face of the conservative religious establishment. The cumulative effect of the work's various categories of anecdote is the literary creation of a highly entertaining, almost picaresque personality. The direct, seemingly naive simplicity of the narrative style with its elements of surprise and subtle humor conveys a remarkable sense of intimacy and humanity to the Shaikh's image and justifies ranking the *Asrār al-Towhīd* as a great classic Sufi work of literature. Moreover, in addition to being a work of primary importance for the history of Islamic religious thought, the variety of settings and the wide range of circumstantial detail which appear throughout the anecdotes make the compilation a rich source for medieval Islamic social and cultural behavior in general.

Shaikh Abu Saʿīd Fazlollāh b. Abi'l-Keyr was born in the small town of Meyhana¹ on the 7th of December, 967, and died there January 12th, 1049, after having acquired widespread fame throughout Khorasan and further afield² for his flamboyant personality, his preaching, and in particular for his high spiritual station which manifested itself through a clear display of miraculous powers. In the present biography various signs of Abu Saʿīd's coming spiritual greatness occur even during his childhood. Nonetheless, he pursues the normal course of studies which would eventually have made him a highly qualified religious scholar. It is only when he is an adult student in the city of Saraks that, according to transmitted accounts, he underwent an intense mystic experience which led to his conversion. He renounced his religious studies, attached himself to a spiritual master, and, from that date forward, engaged in ascetic practices which culminated in his attaining the highest possible spiritual rank, namely the rank of a *vali*.

The *vali* is seen to be the superlatively elect amongst the Sufis. The word occurs in the Qorʾān and originally meant "near", then

"friend", "protégé", or "devotee". The *vali* in popular folk belief is a saint who has been given divine illumination and immediate vision and knowledge of things unseen. He experiences an ecstatic feeling of oneness with God which, according to Sufis, can only come as the result of his having followed the path (*ṭariqat*) of self-purification under the guidance of a spiritual master (*pir*). The process of self-purification is meant to predispose or prepare the devotee to receive the gift of divine grace which is not gained or won by anything a man may do, but comes to him in accordance with his innate spiritual capacity.

In the popular saint-cult the *vali* is conceived of as being a mediator between God and the faithful, as well as a cosmic power in his own right. He bridges the chasm between the absolutely transcendent God postulated by the Qor'ān and legalistic scholasticism in Islam (jurists and traditionalists) on the one hand, and the individual who seeks God's intervention on his behalf, on the other. The *vali* brings relief to the distressed, health to the sick, children to the childless, food to the famished, spiritual guidance to those who entrust their souls to his care, and blessings to all who visit his tomb and invoke Allah in his name. *Valis* from the highest to the lowest are arranged in a graduated hierarchy, with the *qoṭb* (the Pivot) at their head, forming "a saintly board of administration by which the invisible government of the world is carried on"^{3,4}

When, after receiving many years of guidance from spiritual masters and having undergone extreme ascetic austerities, Abu Sa'īd achieved his final and permanent spiritual state, he went to the great metropolis Nishapur where through his preaching he attracted a popular following in the city, as well as numerous devoted disciples. These disciples he was able to provide for materially thanks to the donations of well off patrons and ordinary members of the audience who attended his public discourses and were moved by his words and conduct, and not least by his frequent display of clairvoyance. Eventually, after "converting" the whole city, triumphing over enemies, rivals and pious doubters of his powers, the Shaikh returned to Meyhana where he died and was buried. His tomb which was kept up by his descendants, became a popular pilgrimage shrine where further miracles were witnessed -- even after the ravages of the Ğozz Turkic tribes which destroyed Meyhana and devastated large parts of Khorasan (1154-1157).

Translator's Introduction

It was some thirty odd years after the shrine's final destruction that Ebn-e Monavvar, the Shaikh's great-great-grandson, compiled the *Asrār al-Towhīd*, in order to preserve for posterity the deeds and sayings, and the "spiritual states" of his great ancestor. The heterogeneous material which he brought together in his compilation consists, in the main, of short anecdotes whose structural forms are very different from one another. They portray the Shaikh in his relations with the various representatives of religious and secular authority, particularly in the city of Nishapur, where the majority of the anecdotes are dramatically set. Although the primary motive of the anecdotes, according to the compiler, is to record the Shaikh's miracles, at the same time, numerous themes of concern to Sufis feature in the plot and the circumstantial setting in which the miracles occur. Also included in Ebn-e Monavvar's lengthy work are sections dealing with original sayings of the Shaikh, sayings of other earlier Sufi figures he would cite, verses he used as part of his teaching technique, as well as prayers and letters attributed to him. Finally, Ebn-e Monavvar presents us with anecdotal accounts about the Shaikh's death and posthumous influence through his popular shrine.

Because the compilation includes a rather rich variety of material which was originally the product of many different "authors"⁵, it may at times present some inconsistencies when scrutinized more closely. Nonetheless, certain major characteristics are evident which one feels must bear some relation to the historical Abu Sa'id -- his joyous, ecstatic side, which is contrasted with the sad, lachrymose character of Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni, for instance. On the other hand, from a twentieth century rationalist point of view, one is tempted to view much of the interesting, thematically patterned content of the biography as a stratagem, conscious or otherwise, for situating the Shaikh within the popular tradition of the Islamic holy man. Shaikh Abu Sa'id is, in fact, depicted as speaking and acting in such a way that he displays all those features which accredit his authority and aggrandize his person in accordance with current beliefs about the character and powers of the *vali*, i.e. the holy man who, like a prophet, is chosen by God and sent in every age to give spiritual guidance to the faithful.

However, belief in the *vali* is not uniform throughout the Muslim world and throughout all layers of society. Orthodox "conservatives", particularly scholars learned in Islamic law and the Traditions of the Prophet (jurists and traditionalists) would be most likely to find fault with the figure of Shaikh Abu Sa'id and

clash with him over the issue of who legitimately embodies ultimate religious authority in Muslim society. In the anecdotes we frequently meet with various members of the class of '*olamā*' (religious scholars) who vehemently deny the Shaikh's spiritual authenticity but they are finally, if reluctantly, compelled to repent in all humility and seek the Shaikh's forgiveness. The dynamic behind the composition of the anecdotes often appears to be a propagandistic desire to set up fictitious circumstances within which the Shaikh may be portrayed as triumphing over all opposition. And much of the opposition is based on a conservative disapproval of a wide range of Sufi practices which, according to the religious establishment, did not constitute Sunni Islam.

In view of this preponderant hagiographical concern, the question one comes to ask of any particular anecdote is not so much did this or that event or meeting actually occur, but what is the dramatized scene meant to tell us about the Shaikh in terms of the socio-religious context of his day and age. For instance, there are many anecdotes which offer a justification for practicing the *samā*', i.e. listening to music and dancing as a spiritual experience, which was condemned by some '*olamā*'. Or the Shaikh is several times depicted as emphasizing the notion that no one can achieve progress on the mystic path without the help of a qualified spiritual guide. Or an anecdote may spell it out for us that the Shaikh is superior to learned scholars, one of the most frequent motifs in the biography. Equally, the Shaikh may be portrayed as superior to other well-known Sufis. That Abu Sa'id's spiritual rank is higher than that of Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri (the author of the famous *al-Resālat al-Qoṣeyriya* on Sufism), is demonstrated often enough in anecdotes whose cleverly constructed plots reach their dénouement when the Shaikh, often by dint of his clairvoyance, outwits or overwhelms his sceptical opponent.

The heterogeneous material which Ebn-e Monavvar has collected together in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* was based on an earlier, rather smaller work⁶ compiled by his cousin Jamāl al-Din Abu Rowḥ Loṭfollāh (d. 1147). To this Ebn-e Monavvar, as he tells us himself, has added whatever information he could find which he judged to be authentic. It is intriguing, in view of some of the outlandish miraculous reports which the compiler does include, to speculate as to what material would have appeared flawed and unworthy of inclusion. In his Introduction, Ebn-e Monavvar describes his organization of the biographical material at his disposal as following the beginning, middle and end of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's

Translator's Introduction

life. Book One treats, amongst other things, "the beginning of our Shaikh's mystic state" which includes his childhood, his studies, and his *pirs* and shaikhs, as well as his struggle for spiritual purification. Book Two, which comprises by far the largest section of the work, is divided into three chapters which consist primarily of anecdotes about the Shaikh's miracles and his points of instruction, along with sayings of earlier Sufis which he "cited for the sake of moral benefit". Also included in this section are verses he recited, prayers and a few brief letters attributed to him. Finally, Book Three describes, in three relatively short separate parts, the Shaikh's last recommendations at the time of his death, the circumstances of his death, and lastly, miracles which took place after his death, some of which he had himself predicted.

.....

In what follows I will be making some general comments about certain features of the different categories of materials in the *Asrār al-Towhīd*. I will not be considering the contents of the anecdotes with regard to their historical authenticity. Fritz Meier in his outstanding work, *ABU SA'ID-I ABU L-HAYR, Wirklichkeit und Legende*⁷, explores with characteristic thoroughness the chronological aspects of the Shaikh's career. The events of the Shaikh's life and his alleged meetings with the famous personalities of his day and age are examined in the light of other historical sources for the period. Nor will I enter into the thorny question of whether the mystic experiences recorded in the *Asrār al-Towhīd* are genuine, either in the sense that the reported words of the Shaikh were in fact his own, or that what is recorded is religiously or psychologically true. My focus will be on the thematic nature of the accounts and what some of the motives behind them may be.

SHAIKH ABU SA'ID'S YOUTH AND HIS FEATS OF SELF-MORTIFICATION

When Philostratus composed his life of Apollonius of Tyana in the early 3rd century A.D., he apparently had written sources as well as a living oral tradition to draw on. Being steeped in the Greek rhetorical culture of his age, he saw it as his task to digest the disparate information about Apollonius and present it in the form of a coherent biographical narrative. Despite his lack of concern for rational causation, Philostratus has fitted all "the facts" of Apollonius' life into a compositional format which renders the raw

materials of the legend in a form somewhat like a novel. The same may be said of Eusebius' life of Origen in Book VI of his *Ecclesiastical History* and Athanasius' life of Saint Anthony. Whatever different motives these men had in composing their *vitae*, they took pains to work the biographical materials at hand into a supple, articulated narrative.

This is not how Ebn-e Monavvar organized the biographical materials at his disposal. Ebn-e Monavvar is a compiler in the strict sense of the word. The parts of Book One dealing with the Shaikh's spiritual struggle give the impression of being a patchwork of quotations only loosely connected by a unifying theme. If one wishes to understand the form individual accounts and anecdotes take in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*, it is not simply a question of establishing what Ebn-e Monavvar's motives were in compiling the work, i.e. whether he was endeavoring to win patronage or promote his socio-religious status by presenting his illustrious ancestor Shaikh Abu Sa'id in the most favorable light. It is more important to discern what motives were in the minds of the numerous anonymous authors who shaped Abu Sa'id's legend earlier on by composing, presumably at random, the allegedly authentic reports and anecdotes which Ebn-e Monavvar had before him, either in oral or written form. While bearing in mind the nature of Ebn-e Monavvar's role as editor, let us proceed to consider some of the kinds of reports which have found their way into the *Asrār al-Towḥid*.

One day when the boy and his father are on their way to the mosque, they meet the local mystic Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin.⁸ In an emotional recognition scene, Bešr-e Yāsin testifies that Abu Sa'id is destined to be a *vali* and to look after the needs of the darvishes. With tears in his eyes, Bešr-e Yāsin invites them to come to his cell of retirement when they've performed their prayers. On their way back from the mosque, Bābu Bu'l-Keyr and the Shaikh visit Bešr-e Yāsin and a miracle of symbolic significance takes place. Abu Sa'id's hand warms a loaf of bread which had been set aside in a niche thirty years earlier. Now Bešr-e Yāsin goes even further in endorsing the child's future greatness. He declares: "(this boy) shall bring life to a whole world and shall be the seal upon 'this affair'⁹."

The notion here alluded to is that Abu Sa'id will be the last of the *valis*, just as Moḥammad was the seal, i.e. the last of the prophets. This, of course, was the highest spiritual rank one could hold. Since the era of prophecy had come to an end with the ad-

vent of Islam, the Friends of God (*owliyā**, pl. of *valī*), according to popular belief, were the leading spiritual figures who guide the Muslim community and mediate between God and man. The "seal" of the Friends would be pre-ordained -- in the sense that it is God's providence which sees to it that all such spiritual figures appear in the world for the benefit of mankind. Nonetheless, men like Abu Sa'īd must still struggle and undergo extreme ascetic disciplines and psychic concentration in order to attain what is meant to be their destiny. They must co-operate with "God's providence". On the other hand, when the Shaikh had attained his supreme spiritual status, he was once asked to what he owed his spiritual good fortune (*ruzegār*). He replies that it all came from the effects of one glance from the corner of Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan's eye.¹⁰ Here the focus of the explanation is on the *pir* or spiritual guide and the role he is meant to play in aiding his disciples to reach "the goal". It is frequently emphasized that nothing of value can be achieved without the assistance of the spiritual guide.

When we look at these and other passages which reflect notions concerning how and why a particular individual attains exceptional spiritual power, indeed, the supreme spiritual status conceivable, there does not appear to be a rigidly coherent system of explanation operating in the text. Since, as Ebn-e Monavvar himself indicates in his introduction, the materials he compiled are from such varied and unco-ordinated sources, it is only natural that parallel options occur in the explanations. These options express attitudes and beliefs which one may assume were current in Sufi circles, as well as in popular folk culture. Consequently, what we find is that the tradition has manufactured accounts of how Abu Sa'īd was influenced by his childhood exposure to the Sufis through his father. Then again, that he was "recognized" and guided by Bešr-e Yāsin. And later when a student in Saraks, he is recognized by Loqmān, the wise madman -- as a prelude to a more elaborate conversion scenario.¹¹ Indeed, Loqmān will take him to a *kānaqāh*¹² in the inner city and present him to Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan who is to be Abu Sa'īd's initiatory spiritual guide (*pir*).

The big changes in the Shaikh's life begin when he meets Loqmān-e Saraksī -- at least according to what we may call the main conversion scenario.¹³ True to type, Loqmān the wise madman is sitting on a heap of ashes sewing a patch on his *pustīn*.¹⁴ The Shaikh, who has been studying formal religious sciences in

Saraks, stops to observe him. The Shaikh's shadow falls across the *pustīn* and when Loqmān finishes his sewing, he tells the Shaikh he has sewn him onto his cloak. Loqmān then takes the Shaikh to meet Pir Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan in the latter's *kānaqāh* and joins their hands together. This is the start of the master-disciple relationship which is indispensable if one is to make progress on the mystic path. Pir Bu'l-Faḥl tells the Shaikh that all 24,000 prophets sent to mankind had only one message: "Say: 'Allah', and give your attention to this." The effects of the word pursued the Shaikh all night. The following morning when he attended his religious class, the lesson for the day was the Qor'ānic verse: "Say: 'Allah', and leave them to amuse themselves with idle talk." The Shaikh is visibly overwhelmed by the verse and his teacher sends him back to the *kānaqāh* in a state of intoxication. We might well assume that this is the decisive turning point in the Shaikh's spiritual career. He is abandoning his formal religious studies to set out on the mystic path, i.e. to divest himself of his carnal soul (*nafs*) under the guidance of a qualified spiritual master. And yet, a little earlier we were told that the Shaikh attributed his "mystical good fortune" (*ruzegār*) to one glance from the corner of Pir Bu'l-Faḥl's eye. This along with other variations and discrepancies is characteristic of the reports Ebn Monavvar has collected, and reveals the unco-ordinated nature of the biographical materials he had at his disposal.

Again there are reports describing how the Shaikh "served the darvishes". Though there seems not to have actually been a *kānaqāh* in Meyhana, in order to conform to an idealized portrait, the Shaikh is represented as cleaning out the darvishes' lodgings and their latrines, as well as begging for them and selling his clothes for their sake. By way of explaining why he adopts this approach to humiliating the Self, the Shaikh is portrayed as saying: "I have attained science, religious practice and meditation on God. Now absence from all this is necessary."¹⁵ In the end his *pir* tells him to go before Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami (the famous Sufi shaikh and author) to be given a mystic robe (*kerqa*), as a sign of acceptance into the mystic community.¹⁶ But now, despite his *pir* telling him: "It is complete!", instead of ceasing to practice self-mortification, Abu Sa'īd returns to Meyhana and increases his devotions and austerities.¹⁷ Of course, the explanation cited above which the Shaikh gives for his "serving" the darvishes seems to ignore the conversion scenario involving Loqmān. Clearly, the living tradition Ebn-e Monavvar culled these anecdotes from was never made subject to a board of editors who saw to it that all episodes of his

legend remained consistent. No synthesis of the materials was undertaken with the aim of carefully harmonizing the accounts and consequently disparate elements coexist in the narrative. Different stories emerged which emphasize different aspects of asceticism. And we are therefore faced with a compilation which does not so much preserve historically authentic accounts of what the Shaikh actually underwent by way of self-mortification but what the anonymous authors of the anecdotes felt were appropriate stereotypes.

Pages 101 to 105 provide the fullest description of the "psychology" of self-mortification and the struggle to purify oneself (*mojāheda*) which is presented as what the Shaikh himself once said about his mystic struggle, during one of his public assemblies. It is worth noting how different the manner of the language is compared with most of the other reports presented. If not the actual words of the Shaikh, it may well reflect a theosophical-psychological style used by some Sufi preachers during the late 11th to 12th century. The Shaikh is giving a theosophical interpretation to the Qor'ānic verse: *"Then they are returned unto God, their true Master."* These words, according to the Shaikh, describe the final mystical station. The Shaikh outlines the "psychological stages" he progressed through to reach his permanent mystic state. Here we are told that there must first be contrition. This is, again, quite different from the episode involving Loqmān and Pir Bu'l-Faḡl. Then one must humiliate the Self (*nafs*), help one's fellow men, spend all one's time in the mosque -- not in the bazaar -- and conform to the Prophet's example (*Sonnat*).

The Shaikh is eventually able to undergo the most incredible ascetic disciplines and he feels pride in his achievements. Now he begins to win popular acclaim. However, the Shaikh comes to realize this is all self-conceit. This was really all God's doing, not the result of his effort. While there is a sense of "you" and "He", i.e. while you imagine that you are exercising your will to perform ascetic feats, you are tainted with polytheism (*šerk* -- setting up partners with God). Self must be eliminated. The Shaikh opens the Qor'ān and reads: *"We shall afflict you with good and with evil as a trial and unto Us you shall be returned."* The highest realization which comes at the end of the spiritual struggle is that there is only one subject behind all actions and that subject is God. The Shaikh ends by saying: "After that I was no longer there." And he sums up the spiritual transformation which he has undergone with the verses:

"Today in all ways Baghdad is Bokhara.
With the Prince of Khorasan comes victory!"

The verses were originally probably part of a panegyric¹⁸ to a Sāmānid prince in Bokhara. Symbolically the great prince is God Who enters the city of our being and transforms it into His domain.

And again, we are told that when the Shaikh's mother and father passed away, all restraints out of consideration for his parents were removed from him. Consequently, for seven years the Shaikh resided in the desert which lies between Bāvard, Marv, and Saraks, living from twigs and brambles. After so many years in the desert and now that his *pir*, Bu'l-Fazl, "had passed over to the mercy of God", the Shaikh felt the need for Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb and set out to seek his spiritual company. Bu'l-'Abbās eventually gave him a second mystic robe.¹⁹

All these passages concerning the Shaikh's self-mortification and ascetic disciplines represent different accounts which Ebn-e Monavvar had at his disposal. The episodes involving Loqmān and Bu'l-Fazl in Saraks form one unit. The account of Abu Sa'id begging for the darvishes and giving away his clothes is another. The Shaikh's years in the desert appear to be one more episode in the cumulative portrait. And finally, what is presented as the Shaikh's own account of ascetic striving which details his public acceptance followed by harsh rejection, and then at last his success in eliminating all subtle forms of conceit and Self, displays a different perspective again. The Shaikh's testimony presents, as it were, an interiorized, psychological itinerary with emphasis on the changing states of mind which the subject must accomplish by eliciting God's grace. As a hagiographic tactic, this latter account which outlines the Shaikh's progressive psychic transformation is fundamentally different from the conversion scenario involving Loqmān and Pir Bu'l-Fazl, or the recognition scene in which Beṣr-e Yāsin announces that the Shaikh will be "the seal of the *valis*". The process which manufactured anecdotes to do with the Shaikh being designated as a *vali* and accounts to do with his ascetic struggle to attain permanent unveiling, developed various options for validating claims concerning his unique spiritual authority. That these options present inconsistencies when scrutinized more closely is only to be expected in view of how such a process must have operated -- for the most part within the Shaikh's extended family and amongst his numerous disciples.

It is difficult to reconcile the ascetic image of Shaikh Abu Sa'id in Book One with the outlandish, extravagant Shaikh Abu Sa'id of Book Two where asceticism plays no part in the anecdotes in which he gives free rein to his overpowering charismatic personality. When the reader goes on to Book Two where the Shaikh is portrayed in the city of Nishapur indulging in such extravagant behavior as banqueting, burning huge quantities of precious aloes-wood, and lighting numerous candles during the day, as well as other forms of unascetic or impious practices, he will have to adjust his sights at first. The Shaikh Abu Sa'id of these anecdotes is getting on by playing a very different game with a rather different set of rules and a different style of one-upmanship. Indeed, in Book Two the Shaikh is depicted as downright hostile to asceticism. He insults particular ascetics by ignoring their attentions. He makes disparaging remarks about them in public. The stance he adopts in these anecdotes represents a very different "spiritual strategy". This conspicuous discrepancy arises, it seems to me, because the process at work which manufactured the anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towhīd* simultaneously followed two divergent trends with regard to asceticism. While some of our anonymous authors felt the urge to ascribe exceptional feats of self-mortification to the Shaikh, there were others who delighted in aggrandizing his mystic status by endowing him with outrageous, antinomian deeds and sayings. In so doing, they exercised their pious imaginations in accordance with alternative stereotyped options which were current in their day and age. The compiler himself seems to be vaguely aware of some inconsistency. He attempts to justify the contradiction in the Shaikh's behavior by explaining that in later life the Shaikh enjoyed the fruits of his spiritual struggle and that was a period of direct vision. Ebn-e Monavvar comments: "Hence, the Shaikh necessarily lived in a state of ease and abundance."²⁰

THE SHAIKH'S MATURE YEARS AND HIS THAUMATURGIC GIFTS

In Book Two and Book Three, a wide range of anecdotal material is presented, the bulk of which is not so much biographical, as generally illustrative of Sufi life and teachings. The authors and transmitters of this material, as Abu Sa'id himself, had before them a long tradition of anecdotes, sayings and Sufi preaching to draw on. What the Shaikh's teachings consisted of, their historical antecedents and any possibly authentic traits of the Shaikh preserved

in the anecdotes, Meier deals with in his exhaustive study which I have already had occasion to refer to earlier. For my part, I would like to orient the reader by drawing attention to anecdotes which represent different aspects of the Shaikh's role and function in society, and by giving some brief comments on the motives behind them.

In what follows I have selected anecdotes according to what appear to me as separate possible categories under which to consider the Shaikh's persona: a) as the rival of other spiritual celebrities of his age, b) as a *vali*, c) as a *pir* or spiritual director in the *ḥānaqāh*, and d) as God's representative who appoints great men of the world to power. Of course, these categories did not exist separately from one another in the mind of the authors of the anecdotes or their audience. Putting a particular anecdote in one of these four categories is often arbitrary and merely for convenience. My purpose is to give the reader, by way of introduction, a general outline of the different elements which make up Shaikh Abu Sa'id's composite image. A sizeable number of anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* deal with the Shaikh in relation to the religious establishment. Religious personalities, whether other Sufis or members of the class of learned religious scholars, appear in a variety of relationships with the Shaikh, ranging from outright hostility to enthusiastic veneration. On the other hand, the Shaikh is portrayed in more intimate relations with disciples in the *kānaqāh*. And in addition to situating the Shaikh within the context of religious life, the hagiographical mode has strategies for linking the Shaikh to the major political events of his age, such as the defeat of Sultan Mas'ud at Dandānqān and the rise to power of the Saljuq Turks, and the illustrious career of the Saljuq vezier Nezām al-Molk.

ABU'L-QĀSEM-E KORRAKĀNI

In one anecdote Shaikh Abu Sa'id and Shaikh Abu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni appear seated together on a raised platform.²¹ A darvish looks up at the two splendid figures and wonders what spiritual rank they hold. The Shaikh, thanks to his clairvoyance, is aware of what passed through the darvish's mind. The Shaikh exclaims: "... (here are) two kings together in one place and at one time, on one throne and with one heart..." This remark of the Shaikh's gives the impression that both famous mystics enjoy equal status in the spiritual hierarchy and are indeed maintaining a harmonious

contact with one another. And yet, such an image in the *Asrār al-Towhīd* is not at all typical. For the most part, anecdotes which present the Shaikh in relation to his religious contemporaries consist of outright clashes and various forms of one-upmanship on the Shaikh's part. Whatever subsidiary motifs they may contain, anecdotes to do with the Shaikh's "interprofessional relations" can all be classified under the general heading of one-upmanship on the Shaikh's part and self-aggrandizement. And the anecdotes which portray the Shaikh's dealings with Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, the person who features more frequently in this class of anecdotes than anyone else, are no exception to this rule.

ABU'L-QĀSEM-E QOṢEYRI

No sooner has the Shaikh arrived in Nishapur and installed himself in the *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street where he will live and hold assemblies during his stay in the metropolis, than Qoṣeyri's disciples come and question him.²² They ask him what he thinks of Qoṣeyri's statement: "The servant reaches God with two steps." The Shaikh replies: "Not so! I say the servant reaches God with one step..." The conflict is underway. The disciples report to Qoṣeyri. They are then sent back to the Shaikh to ask what he means by one step. The Shaikh explains: "...and that consists of taking one step outside the Self in order to reach God." Just then a street vendor passes by the *kānaqāh* door and cries out: "*Kamā* and every one a fine delicacy!" The Shaikh says: "Hark to the words of this unaware fellow and do as he says." The Shaikh takes *kamā* (perhaps a truffle, certainly some kind of food) as a homonym of the verb "be diminished". The other words may then be construed: "And all that remains is grace and bounty." The street vendor's cry is made to express the Shaikh's fundamental Sufi teaching: eliminate the Self and what remains is God. In short, it is a miraculous coincidence and confirms the Shaikh's original assertion. When Qoṣeyri is told of the Shaikh's words and what happened, he can only comment: "It is as the Shaikh says."

However, Qoṣeyri will still not go to hear the Shaikh discourse. Only after one year when he has lost many disciples to the Shaikh, does he decide to attend the Shaikh's assembly.²³ He rises at dawn and goes outside to urinate but he commits a ritual impropriety. "...taking hold of oneself from outside the robe is not religious custom (*Sunnat*)... Religious custom requires that the hand remain inside the robe, so that no area of the private parts is

exposed -- even when you are all alone." Indeed, the Prophet has declared: *"Feel shame before those who see you, though you do not see them."* Qoṣeyri then tells his maidservant: "Get up and polish the bridle and the metal trappings of my saddle." Later, during the assembly, when Qoṣeyri witnesses how inspired the Shaikh's discourse is and the extent of his clairvoyance, he wonders why God has bestowed greater spiritual gifts on the Shaikh than on himself. At this point the Shaikh suddenly turns to Qoṣeyri and reprimands him for not having scrupulously observed ritual prescriptions which go back to the Prophet. "Oh Ostād, is 'this inspiration' being sought after when the *k'vāja* takes hold of himself contrary to religious custom...?" And the Shaikh criticizes Qoṣeyri's vanity by saying he should polish the mirror of his heart, not his bridle and saddle. "Ostād Imam was totally confounded. A flush of joy came over him and he went into a swoon." From then on, so we are told, Abu Sa'īd and Qoṣeyri were the best of friends.

Finally, there is an amusing anecdote involving Qoṣeyri which treats the question of homosexual love.²⁴ Qoṣeyri has beaten a darvish, "defrocked" him and driven him out of the city because the darvish "...entertained amorous feelings for *K'vāja Esmā'ilak-e Daqqāq*" who was Qoṣeyri's brother-in-law. The darvish had said to a patron: "Give a banquet tonight with reciters and see that Esmā'ilak is present, that I may be in his company tonight and raise shouts gazing on his beauty. Indeed, I am burning up in my love for him." When the Shaikh hears how Qoṣeyri has behaved, he decides to teach him a lesson. The Shaikh has a big banquet arranged and invites all the darvishes of the city, as well as Qoṣeyri. When the main meal is over, Bu Ṭāher, the Shaikh's eldest son, is serving dessert. "He had not yet reached the age of shaving and was extremely beautiful. He had on a half-length robe and was moving about at the head of the table-cloth like a shining candle." The Shaikh instructs Bu Ṭāher to take a bowl of candy to the darvish Bu 'Ali-ye Torṣizi. And the Shaikh adds: "Eat half a candy yourself and put the other half in Bu 'Ali's mouth!" Bu Ṭāher kneels respectfully before the said darvish and, with his own hand, twice puts two half candies in the fellow's mouth. "At that the darvish let out a cry and tore his robe. Uttering a vow to depart for Mecca, he ran out of the *kānaqāh*, shouting as he ran." The Shaikh says to Qoṣeyri: "Oh Ostād, if it is possible to drive a darvish from the city with half a piece of almond candy and send him on his way to Mecca, what is the purpose of

causing the fellow so much distress and taking away his robe and disgracing him? ...For the last four years this darvish has been taken with Bu Ṭāher, but I did not bring this matter out in the open." Qoṣeyri, flabbergasted as usual, admits: "An error has been committed. Every day I must learn from you once again what it means to be a Sufi."

Nothing better sums up the dynamic at work in the anecdotes dealing with the Shaikh and Qoṣeyri. Whatever other thematic elements are worked into these anecdotes, the overriding concern is to portray the Shaikh as superior and in the dominant role with regard to Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri. Nor, in view of the narrative structure and the generally tendentious nature of the anecdotes, does one feel that they preserve some kernel of historical fact. It is quite possible, as Šafi'i-Kadkani has remarked²⁵, that the two famous figures actually never even met one another. Certainly, Qoṣeyri was not a devoted admirer of the Shaikh as the anecdotes make out. In Qoṣeyri's numerous writings on Sufism that have come down to us there is no mention of Shaikh Abu Sa'īd. One cannot imagine that the issues to do with urinating and homosexuality have any special relevance to Qoṣeyri's particular religious views. Playfully exploiting these subjects to build up the Shaikh's persona at Qoṣeyri's expense is a strategy which could have been adopted against anyone. Because of Qoṣeyri's prestige it is important that he be represented as subordinate to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, while admiring and respecting the Shaikh. Other celebrated Sufi personalities are represented in a different relationship with the Shaikh.

BU 'ABDOLLĀH-E BĀKU

Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku (Bākuya) was older than the Shaikh and enjoyed great prestige as the spiritual director who took over Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami's *kānaqāh* in Nishapur after the latter's death. From the number of anecdotes he features in it appears that the biographical tradition considers him as next in importance after Qoṣeyri as a foil to the Shaikh's personality. And indeed, he is depicted as challenging the Shaikh more directly and more aggressively than Qoṣeyri. When Bu 'Abdollāh hears the Shaikh's opening words during an assembly, he makes a sarcastic remark under his breath: "How much wind is in Wind's Castle²⁶."²⁷ But the Shaikh, being aware through his clairvoyance, turns the remark around and retorts: "Yes, indeed, Wind's Castle is the source of wind!" Wind also means pride in Persian and the Shaikh's re-

mark is in reference to Bu ‘Abdollāh’s vanity. When the Shaikh warms up in his discourse, Bu ‘Abdollāh witnesses the Shaikh’s mystic state and the extent of his clairvoyance. He is puzzled and thinks: “So many times have I made the pilgrimage to Mecca, destitute of all means, and I have met so many spiritual masters and waited upon them! What is the reason that so much has been revealed to this man and nothing has been revealed to me?” The pattern is the same as when Qoṣeyri wondered why God has given more gifts to the Shaikh than to himself. The situation is another set up for the Shaikh to use his clairvoyance and indulge in one-upmanship. The Shaikh turns to Bu ‘Abdollāh and answers him with verses to the effect that their “fortune” (*ruzegār*) is different, i.e. God chooses to give different gifts to different persons. Bu ‘Abdollāh is amazed by the Shaikh’s powers and when the assembly is over, he wants to effect a reconciliation with the Shaikh. After some hesitation the Shaikh consents, rather begrudgingly, to come to Bu ‘Abdollāh’s *kānaqāh*: “The glance of many spiritual masters and men of distinction has fallen upon you. I shall come for the sake of their glances and not for your sake.”

As for Bu ‘Abdollāh’s proud bearing, in another anecdote the Shaikh abruptly puts Bu ‘Abdollāh in his place during an assembly.²⁸ Bu ‘Abdollāh: “was sitting with a lack of proper composure. He bore himself like a lord and sat cross-legged.” A person in the audience, by way of thanking the Shaikh for something, says: “May God grant you Paradise!” But the Shaikh replies: “Oh no, not for me! I have no wish for Paradise! ...with its gang of handicapped and poor. There’s no one there but the lame, the blind and the helpless. What I want is Hell where Jamšid, Nimrod, Pharaoh and Hāmān²⁹ reside, where this lord is...” And he pointed to Bu ‘Abdollāh. Bu ‘Abdollāh was put to shame and came back to his senses. At the end of the discourse he asks the Shaikh for forgiveness. Again, as with Qoṣeyri, there is an anecdote involving Bu ‘Abdollāh which deals with the theme of justifying the *samā’*.³⁰ Bu ‘Abdollāh only comes to accept mystic dancing after he has had three consecutive dreams in which the spirit voice (*hātef*) declared: “*Rise and dance for the sake of God!*” With regard to the Shaikh’s notorious unascetic life style, when Bu ‘Abdollāh takes ombrage observing the Shaikh sitting like a sultan propped up on pillows, the Shaikh admonishes him: “Do not look at the throne. Look at the character and disposition!”³¹

Finally, as with Qoşeyri, Bu 'Abdollah is taught a serious lesson, in this case concerning established practice in the *kānaqāh*³². Bu 'Abdollah is portrayed as challenging the Shaikh on three fundamental points to do with communal life in the *kānaqāh*. "Oh Shaikh, there are several things I see you do that my spiritual masters never did... One is that you seat the young men with the elders and in spiritual matters you treat the little as equal to the big³³. And when distributing donations, you make no distinction between the big and the little." Bu 'Abdollah also objects that the Shaikh allows the young men to perform the *samā'*. And thirdly, he notes that when a darvish throws off his robe, the Shaikh sometimes gives it back to him. In defence of his behavior, the Shaikh declares that none of the devotees is little. Indeed, whoever sets out on the mystic path, may be given in one day what has been bestowed on the Shaikh in seventy years. As for the *samā'*, dancing has the virtue of driving the sensual passions forth from the limbs and thus keeps the young from committing major sins. Lastly, the robe which is returned to a darvish is not the same robe. The robe which is thrown off in ecstasy belongs to the darvish group but they also have a duty to clothe their fellow darvish. Thus the robe they give him is their robe. Bu 'Abdollah, just as flabbergasted as Qoşeyri, replies on cue: "Had I not met the Shaikh, I would never have set eyes upon a Sufi!"

Here again an outstanding Sufi personality is represented as subordinate to the Shaikh and, though to some extent an opponent to begin with, he is won over and, in the end, provides prestigious testimony to the Shaikh's high spiritual rank. The primary difference is that Bu 'Abdollah's relationship with the Shaikh is depicted in less warm and friendly tones. More rough edges appear in the dealings between the two Sufi shaikhs in this small group of anecdotes. One might imagine that this difference reflects an actual historical conflict which existed between the two men. Without a doubt, there were real disagreements between prominent Sufis concerning the *samā'* and matters of etiquette and organization within the *kānaqāh*. But to my mind, the anecdotes in their present form do not preserve the actual conflicts which took place between historical individuals. Rather they exploit such controversies in a stereotyped form in wholly invented plots in order to promote the Shaikh's image. Because Bu 'Abdollah was the spiritual director of Solami's famous *kānaqāh*, it is natural to portray him as challenging the Shaikh in terms of current controversies to do with *kānaqāh* life. The only implicit choice being made is that the

anecdotal tradition preferred to depict Abu Saʿid as on better terms with Qoṣeyri because of the latter's great prestige, than with Bu ʿAbdollāh-e Bāku.

PIR BU ʿALI-YE SIYĀH AND K^VĀJA ʿALI-YE KABBĀZ

As an example of full-fledged jealousy blocking friendly relations between the Shaikh and other Sufi figures of high standing, there is the anecdote describing the Shaikh's visit to the principal *kānaqāh* in Marv.³⁴ Pir Bu ʿAli-ye Siyāh is the spiritual director of the group and K^Vāja ʿAli-ye Kabbāz is the servant (*kādem*) of the Sufis. With reference to the Shaikh, Pir Bu ʿAli says to K^Vāja ʿAli: "That bird is coming... He will pick up the grain that lies before you and me!" Nonetheless, when the Shaikh arrives they want him to stay in their *kānaqāh*, if only out of "spiritual snobbery". Pir Bu ʿAli tells the Shaikh: "Every year we wait upon a thousand owls in the hope that one falcon will arrive. Now so great a falcon has arrived. We will not allow him to alight somewhere else." The Shaikh reprimands him for this attitude. "There is need here for generosity! All are falcons. No one is an owl." Bu ʿAli sees his error and is depicted as saying: "The Shaikh has shown us to ourselves. Had he not done so, we would have come to be destroyed."

When the Shaikh begins his discourse in their *kānaqāh* and displays his spiritual greatness, K^Vāja ʿAli experiences jealousy. Likewise, Pir Bu ʿAli fears: "If the people see him and hear his words and behold his awesome authority, I will lose my spiritual domain (*velāyat*) and lose the people of Marv." The Shaikh, of course, is aware of their inner thoughts. He therefore says to K^Vāja ʿAli: "Oh K^Vāja, go out to your bazaar. They cook fine chapatis. Bring me a chapati, one as fine as your face." The Shaikh is brought a chapati which he then gives to Pir Bu ʿAli, saying: "Here now! I have sold you Marv and the domain of Marv for this chapati and I give you the chapati to keep as well." One insult after the other. Not only has he condescended to "sell" Pir Bu ʿAli the *velāyat* of Marv for a mere chapati but he lets him keep the chapati to boot. The Shaikh then gets up and leaves the *kānaqāh*. As much as they beseech him, he will not stay.

Qoṣeyri, Bu ʿAbdollāh-e Bāku and Pir Bu ʿAli-ye Siyāh are all Sufi shaikhs like Shaikh Bu Saʿid. Their prestige and social standing is not solely based on their high degree of religious learning,

Translator's Introduction

as in the case of other '*olamā*'. Though not depicted in detail in the anecdotes, it is taken for granted that they function as spiritual directors in a *kānaqāh* of their own. They have disciples whose spiritual development they supervise and they speak before public assemblies. Their relationships to the Shaikh, however, are different and represent the range of normal possibilities in the anecdotal repertoire. Qoṣeyri fully accepts the Shaikh's superiority and coexists in admiring accord with the Shaikh (though they are in a sense competing for "territorial rights" in the same city). Bu 'Abdollāh, on the other hand, is forced to recognize the Shaikh's superiority but judging by the tone and circumstances in the anecdotes, does so rather begrudgingly. One senses that the atmosphere of their mutual disapproval cannot be so easily cleared up. In Pir Bu 'Ali's case, we are treated to an entertaining display of the Shaikh's one-upmanship at its best. Pir Bu 'Ali is afraid of losing his spiritual domain. This kind of confrontation between Sufi shaikhs is a standard recurrence in later Sufi hagiography. If, for one reason or another, two rivals cannot be reconciled, some variation of the present formula is a handy way to deal with the situation. Though actually in retreat, the Shaikh emerges from the encounter as spiritually superior, while the "small minded" rival remains in full possession of his territorial domain (*velāyat*).

ABU'L-HASAN-E KARAQĀNI

As a final example of the Shaikh's relationship with other well-known Sufis, I would like to single out the account which describes the Shaikh's visit to Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni.³⁵ The relationship which is sketched between the Shaikh and Karaqāni is very different in character from what we find in the other anecdotes. The Shaikh is not presented in a dominant role asserting his superiority by exposing the flaws of a rival. An effort has been made to portray an intimate, "psychic rapport" as existing between two celebrated mystics. By contrast, in the accounts dealing with the Shaikh's personal contacts with his alleged spiritual masters, Abu'l-Faḥr-e Ḥasan, Solami and Abu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb, less imagination, it seems to me, has gone into delineating their relations. Ebn-e Monavvar tells us at the beginning that the account is a composite of several narratives which go back to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and KVāja Bu'l-Faḥr (the Shaikh's grandson). It is also the longest account in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*, being clearly a mixture of separate anecdotal units which have their own recogn-

izable narrative structure, and "factual" passages which show no concern to entertain or instruct the reader but relate dry, circumstantial detail as if such were the very way things had occurred. Several themes are woven together, for instance: justification of the Shaikh's never having made the pilgrimage to Mecca -- the Ka'ba comes to him; Karaqāni, an older great mystic personality, testifies to the uniqueness of a younger figure who, it is implied, will replace him in the spiritual hierarchy; a contrast is presented between Karaqāni as a mystic personality steeped in sorrow and the Shaikh as an exponent of ecstatic joy.

Abu Ṭāher, the Shaikh's eldest son, having experienced ecstatic joy during the *samā'*, makes a vow to set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca. To everyone's surprise, the Shaikh declares that he will accompany him. As the Shaikh and his numerous entourage are riding out through the city gate of Nishapur, the Shaikh exclaims: "If it were not for my presence, those dear ones would be unable to bear the grief." This is a cryptic prediction referring to the future murder of Karaqāni's beloved son. The murder takes place the night before the Shaikh arrives in Karaqān (on the route to Mecca). A darvish arrives in Karaqān to announce the Shaikh's imminent arrival, explaining that the Shaikh and his group are a day late because the Shaikh lost his way. Karaqāni exclaims: "Silence! He doesn't lose his way." Karaqāni says the Shaikh was drawn aside to a land that thirsted for the footsteps of a Friend. God granted that land's wish and while the Shaikh was absent, Karaqāni's son was beheaded. When they hear this, the Shaikh's company realizes what the Shaikh had meant as they were leaving Nishapur.

When the Shaikh reaches Karaqān, Karaqāni tells him: "For the arrival of such a person the life of Bu'l-Qāsem (his son) was sacrificed." He then says: "Sit in my seat", which suggests that Karaqāni is appointing him as his spiritual successor (*jā-nešīn*). The Shaikh stays with Karaqāni for three days but doesn't speak, explaining: "I have been brought here to listen". Karaqāni says to the Shaikh: "You are what I wished for from God..." Karaqāni had beseeched God: "Send me one of Your Friends so that I may whisper these secrets of Yours to him... I am an old man and weak... You have been brought to me..." And with regard to the pilgrimage theme: "You are too esteemed to be taken to Mecca. The Ka'ba will be brought to you, so that it may circumambulate you." One of the Shaikh's wives is present. By way of providing testimony, Karaqāni is depicted as telling her: "You are associating with the

Translator's Introduction

True. Here nothing of human nature remains. Here no concupiscent soul remains. There is only the True! There is only the True!" These are strong words from perhaps the most famous mystic authority of the age.

To illustrate the unusual intimacy which exists between them, we are told that Karaqāni would whisper mystic secrets to the Shaikh and they would both weep. Then, passing his hand under the Shaikh's robe and placing it over the Shaikh's breast, Karaqāni would say: "I am laying my hand on the Light Eternal." As a spiritual personality Karaqāni is famous for enduring extreme grief and sorrow. This is referred to several times in the account, as for example when Karaqāni tells the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, I suffer pains such that the prophets themselves would be too weak to sustain. Were I to fetch up one sigh from this pain, the heavens and earth would be annihilated!" The Shaikh's pilgrimage consists of giving his support to Karaqāni by being with him. In this connection Karaqāni tells the Shaikh: "Every night I see the Ka'ba circumambulating your head. You have no need to go to the Ka'ba... You were brought here for this. You have performed the pilgrimage... Had this been otherwise, Bu'l-Ḥasan would no longer exist." A major point being made here is that Karaqāni could not have borne so much grief were it not for the Shaikh having visited him. This also implies that when Bu Ṭāher made a vow to go to Mecca, it was really part of a "higher" scheme to bring Shaikh Abu Sa'īd and Karaqāni together.

Though the intention of continuing to Mecca is abandoned by the Shaikh as well as Bu Ṭāher after Karaqāni's latter remark, the Shaikh wishes to go on to Baṣṭām to visit the tomb of Bāyazīd-e Baṣṭāmi. Karaqāni exclaims: "You have performed the *Ḥajj*. Now you will undertake the 'Omra³⁶." And when, on his way back to Nishapur, the Shaikh stays in Karaqān for the second time, Karaqāni again testifies to the Shaikh's spiritual uniqueness. Before the darvishes who are present Karaqāni declares that on the day of resurrection all the spiritual masters will be brought together and told to speak to the people about "the True". But, for Bu Sa'īd, a pulpit will be set up at the foot of God's Throne: "...so that he may speak about the True to the True, and he will not exist in the middle." As for the Shaikh's not having spoken while visiting Karaqāni, the Shaikh tells his followers back in Nishapur that when he arrived in Karaqān: "...I turned to dust in that dust and came to an end. Indeed, the great do not speak."

I have omitted much from this lengthy account in order to focus on the unusual relationship between the Shaikh and Karaqāni. Here we are not dealing with an account like the anecdotes which display the Shaikh's one-upmanship *vis-à-vis* the whole religious establishment in Nishapur. Several short cameo scenes are presented in which the great Karaqāni has the opportunity to give his fullest possible endorsement to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's mystic status. Standard themes are introduced such as the Shaikh being completely free from *nafs* (concupiscent soul). Only the True now remains in him. And the problem (from an orthodox point of view) of the Shaikh never having made the pilgrimage to Mecca is neatly dealt with. Karaqāni is depicted as releasing the Shaikh from the normal Muslim obligation of going on the *Hajj* and testifies that he witnesses the Ka'ba rotating above the Shaikh's head. Finally, just in case any one were to object that Karaqāni and Abu Sa'īd are in reality incompatible personalities, that, in particular, Karaqāni's sorrowful temperament presents a glaring contradiction to the Shaikh's notorious life style, we are told specifically that, on the occasion of the Shaikh's departure, Karaqāni declares: "Your path is one of expansion and joy, and my path is one of contraction and sorrow³⁷. Now you be happy and go on living joyfully, while I undergo your grief, for we are both carrying out His work."

EMĀM AL-ḤARAMEYN ABU'L-MA'ĀLI-YE JOVEYNI

Religious scholars have always formed the elite class in Islamic cities right up to modern times. Khorasan, in particular, produced some of the most famous scholars of the Muslim Middle Ages who gravitated to the great metropolis of Nishapur. In view of the supreme importance accorded to religious learning (*ʿilm*) in Muslim society, it is only natural that anecdotes be fabricated which dramatize the Shaikh's relations with the *ʿulamāʾ*. Two ploys are especially convenient. The Shaikh, while demonstrating his superiority, will win the admiration and devotion of the most famous among the class of religious scholars and, despite the inherent contradiction, the Shaikh will be portrayed as condemning the small-mindedness and lack of spirituality of the run of the mill scholar of Islamic jurisprudence (jurist/*faqih* or *dānešmand*)

Perhaps the greatest single name in the realm of the religious sciences is Emām al-Ḥarameyn Abu'l-Ma'āli-ye Joveyni. He and his learned father, Abu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, are depicted as

Translator's Introduction

visiting the Shaikh in his *kānaqāh*.³⁸ Until this moment Bu Moḥammad has disapproved of the Shaikh but in a dream he has been told: "You are turning your face away from a person who holds the rank of Beloved of God here on earth." Bu Moḥammad declares: "I woke up and nothing of my former hostility toward the Shaikh remained. For every previous disagreement, one thousand forms of love had become manifest." Emām al-Ḥarameyn, not knowing of the dream, is confused by his father's intimacy with the Shaikh and asks him what the cause of the sudden change is. Bu Moḥammad explains that he himself holds the spiritual rank of "Friend of God" which corresponds to the prophetic rank of Abraham, Qoṣeyri's rank is that of "Speaker with God" which corresponds to Moses, whereas the Shaikh is the "Beloved of God" which corresponds to the Prophet Moḥammad -- the last and the greatest of God's emissaries to mankind. According to this sort of presentation, there is no conflict between the Shaikh and truly great scholars. Shaikh Abu Sa'id and such prominent scholars as Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri, and Abu Moḥammad-e Joveyni and his son, Abu'l-Ma'ālī, are here fitted into a complementary hierarchy with the Shaikh naturally holding the highest possible rank.

IMAM MOḤAMMAD-E QĀYENI

In the case of Imam Moḥammad-e Qāyeni who meets the Shaikh when the Shaikh comes to Qāyen on a visit, matters turn out very differently.³⁹ During the *samā'* a state of joy has come over the Shaikh and the whole darvish group is dancing with him in ecstasy. Moḥammad-e Qāyeni is observing them when the muezzin sounds the call to prayer. Moḥammad-e Qāyeni is agitated and exclaims: "Prayers! Prayers!" The Shaikh replies: "We are performing the prayers." The Shaikh continues to dance and Imam Moḥammad goes off to pray. Later the Shaikh comments: "From where the sun rises to the point where it sets, the sun shines on no one more distinguished or more learned than this man... And yet, he doesn't have so much as the tip of a hair's understanding of 'this affair'⁴⁰." Here we have the full-fledged contrast between the Sufi emphasis on direct experience and the conservative legalistic aspect of Islam. In a similar vein is the Shaikh's remark concerning a learned jurist who was brought to Meyhana to censor him.⁴¹ When the jurist is present, someone asks the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, how much blood of a flea is condoned? How much can there be

on someone and he is still fit to perform the prayers⁴²?" The Shaikh replies: "The imam of flea's blood is K^Vāja Imam." And he points to the scholar, saying: "Ask him these kinds of questions. When you ask me a question, ask about Him!" Both these confrontations with imams reflect, in popular anecdotal form, the fundamental contradiction between formal Islamic religious sciences and the experiential character of the Sufi movement.

The impression we get from this whole group of anecdotes is that the Shaikh has close dramatic encounters with various representatives of the religious elite of his day. At first almost all these figures are against him, perhaps simply because such a situation makes for a more entertaining story and allows the Shaikh to triumph over all opposition. But the Shaikh's relationship to the Sufi figures such as Qoṣeyri, Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku, Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Siyāh, as well as to the famous scholarly religious authorities like Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni and Emām al-Ḥarameyn -- to mention only those I have referred to above -- displays a certain variety. The range discernible in the relationships is not due to historical reality. It is due to what each famous person or the office he held represented or came to represent in the popular imagination of ensuing generations. Individual characterization or real doctrinal differences are never dealt with in the anecdotes. It suffices to note that Qāzi Ṣā'ed was the chief judge of Nishapur and the leader of the Ḥanafī *mazhab*, that Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Tuni was a Karrāmi (both groups rejecting the miracles recognized by Sufis), that Qoṣeyri had many disciples, and Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Siyāh was the head of the Sufis in Marv. In the case of 'Abdollāh-e Anṣārī and Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi, it suffices to focus on their famous eloquence and to link that one outstanding trait to their contact with Shaikh Abu Sa'id.

THE SHAIKH AS A "FRIEND OF GOD" (*VALI*)

An important concern of the anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* is to establish beyond any shadow of a doubt that Shaikh Abu Sa'id is a *vali*, indeed the last and therefore the greatest of all the *valis*. To achieve this aim, much ingenuity has gone into working out plots which demonstrate that the Shaikh possesses the typical characteristics of a *vali*, and illustrate how he discharges the office of *velāyat*. We have seen how by the end of Book One where the Shaikh's ascetic struggle is depicted, the Shaikh has fulfilled his spiritual destiny and succeeded in eliminating his *nafs* (Self, concupiscent soul). As a result he attains permanent "unveiling".

Translator's Introduction

Many anecdotes allude to this rare spiritual qualification of the Shaikh's. Perhaps what best epitomizes this point is the Shaikh's famous theopathic exclamation: "In the⁴³ robe there is only God!"⁴⁴ Overcome with inspiration, the Shaikh utters these words before a group of well-known religious figures of his day -- men like Qoşeyri, the two Joveynis (Bu Moḥammad and Emām al-Ḥarameyn), Esmā'il-e Şābuni (the *kaṭib* or preacher in Nishapur's Congregational Mosque), and several other distinguished 'olamā'. Their presence on this occasion is a form of shorthand for the entire religious establishment of the city. None of these authorities raises an objection to what in reality they would surely have regarded as shocking heresy. By not being scandalized in the anecdote, they are tacitly giving their seal of approval to the Shaikh's status as *vali*. What, then, are some signs of being a *vali* and what, according to the anecdotes, is the Shaikh's actual function as a *vali* within the Muslim community?

One of the signs of being a *vali*, at least in the Shaikh's unusual case, we have already met with when the Shaikh visits Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni and Karaqāni testifies to seeing the Ka'ba circumambulating the Shaikh's head. The point is then made that the Shaikh has no need to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca. The Ka'ba comes to him. We are left to imagine that this great honor is one more sign of the Shaikh's spiritual uniqueness. In another anecdote someone sees the Shaikh in a dream and remarks to him that he is not sitting in his usual place in the *kānaqāh*.⁴⁵ The Shaikh replies: "I have no place, neither above nor below, not to the right nor to the left, not in any direction. I am here abiding in space for the good of mankind and in order to look after men's needs and see that their affairs turn out for the best." Here the idea of not being in space appears as a corollary of his having eliminated Self, of not having an "I" and not existing "in the middle", i.e. the only real agent behind all the Shaikh's actions is God. From the point of view of the Muslim community, the value of the mystic having attained such a state (*velāyat*) is that he then becomes their protector and intercessor.

KVĀJA BU MANŞUR-E VARQĀNI

KVāja Bu Manşur-e Varqāni is presented in an anecdote as the vezier of Sultan Toğrel.⁴⁶ When he is on the point of dying, he calls Qoşeyri and Shaikh Abu Sa'id before him and says: "I would

like both of you great men to be present at my funeral and to stay by my tomb until, with your help, I have undergone the interrogation⁴⁷." During the proceedings of the funeral, Qoṣeyri is called away but when he heads back to join the Shaikh at the vezier's grave: "The Shaikh meets him and says: 'There was no need to do anything.'" The Shaikh explains that when he sat by the grave: "The Two Envoys⁴⁸ arrived and began their interrogation. Then one of them said to the other: 'Don't you see who's there at the grave?' That's all they said and then they both left." Presumably the Shaikh, through his intercession, can get us all off the hook when we are called upon to face the final reckoning. This is one of the most important reasons for being his personal devotee. But although the Shaikh fulfills the vital role of intermediary between man and God and therefore deserves every sign of respect, he is not himself affected by the outward signs of our devotion to his person.

EBRĀHIM INĀL

In one anecdote Ebrāhim Ināl, the chief of police in Nishapur, meets the Shaikh in the street and dismounts to make obeisance and to pay him respect.⁴⁹ The Shaikh exclaims: "Lower your head further!" And again the Shaikh orders: "Still lower!" Finally, the Shaikh dismisses Ebrāhim Ināl: "It is complete. *In the name of Allah*, mount up!" A darvish who is present is disturbed by this apparent grand manner of the Shaikh's. The Shaikh turns to him and says: "Oh darvish, don't you know that whoever presents me with greetings does so for His sake? My bodily frame is the *qebḷa*⁵⁰ of mankind's striving to draw near to God and yet, the goal is God -- *great is His glory!* I, in fact, do not exist." And the Shaikh adds: "The Ka'ba has been fixed as the *qebḷa* for all Muslims, so that men may prostrate themselves before Him. The Ka'ba itself doesn't really exist." The parallel is obvious. Ebrāhim Ināl has been made to "prostrate" himself before the manifestation of God's authority here on earth. The Shaikh has no distinct identity separate from God. Consequently, there is no risk that any extreme forms of devotion to his person could flatter his vanity.

THE BUTCHER AND THE ILLICIT MEAT

In more general and practical terms the Shaikh as a *vali* is depicted as looking after the Muslims. There is the story of the

Translator's Introduction

butcher who had fattened up a lamb for months and when it died, could not bring himself to throw it away.⁵¹ Though from the legal ritual point of view the carcass was "illicit" and unfit for a Muslim to eat, the butcher was offering it for sale. The Shaikh, aware of the situation through his clairvoyance, orders his servant Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to buy the lamb with the only money the *kānaqāh* has, and to throw it to the scavenging dogs at the garbage dump. All the darvishes in the *kānaqāh* are puzzled. When the butcher sees what Ḥasan does with the lamb after purchasing it, he comes before the Shaikh, weeps, and confesses publicly to what he has done. A shep-herd who has witnessed the Shaikh's miraculous intervention, donates twenty sheep to the Shaikh and thus meat is made available to the darvishes in the *kānaqāh*. In closing the Shaikh explains: "All this was necessary, so that first the dogs could grease their jaws and this man (the butcher) could attain his goal, and then you could have licit meat."

THE MOHTASEB

And the Shaikh is portrayed in a similar role in an anecdote which tells of the wicked censor (*mohtaseb*) in Nishapur who is a partisan of the Karrāmi sect.⁵² The censor is taking a bundle of dirty laundry to be washed and on his way looks in at the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*. He dislikes the Shaikh and decides he will come back and reprimand him. First he goes to an old washerman and gives him the dirty clothes to wash. The old man complains he's not been given enough money even to pay for the soap. The censor beats him cruelly and then returns to deal with the Shaikh. Entering the *kānaqāh*, the censor shouts at the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, how long will you continue with this hypocrisy and conceit?" The Shaikh asks: "K^Vāja censor, what should I do?" The censor replies: "You shouldn't speak before assemblies and you shouldn't recite poetry." The Shaikh then bowls him over by saying he will do as the censor wishes but the censor should not behave as he did to the washerman this morning. "Whenever you need your clothes washed, bring them here and give them to Ḥasan. That way no Muslim will suffer harm at your hands and no sin will be committed." Here the theme of the Shaikh's protecting the Muslims is illustrated, while the Karrāmi sect which denies the miraculous powers of Sufi shaikhs, receives a few sideswipes in the process.

BU BAKR-E KATTĀNI

According to orthodox, conservative thinking, religious knowledge (*ʿelm*) is what gives a man his high social status in the community. Religious learning includes knowledge of the Qorʾān, the acts and sayings of the Prophet Moḥammad who is the exemplar every Muslim should model his life on, and the Holy Law (*ṣariʿat*) which regulates every aspect of a Muslim's daily life. In the Muslim community, i.e. what is ideally meant to be a sacred society established here on earth, religious knowledge is theoretically everything. From the point of view of the Sufi movement which, apart from whatever spiritual content it contained, had to contend as an outsider with the religious establishment whose prestige is founded on learning, it was only natural to adopt strategies which either play down the importance of religious scholarship or claim to transcend its limitations. The *vali*, therefore, has little to gain by competing against the pretensions to learning of the *ʿulamāʾ*. The *vali* stands to gain more if he can somehow change the rules of the game. There can be no greater advantage in the struggle for socio-religious status than a direct "hot line" to God which absolves the mystic from cultivating ties with famous transmitters of "knowledge" and accumulating prestigious learned diplomas.

Treating the theme of how the *vali* receives divine knowledge directly from the Source, is the anecdote about Bu Bakr-e Kattāni.⁵³ He is described as residing in Mecca where he lived for thirty years inside the Ḥejr⁵⁴ under the Roof Gutter⁵⁵ – without ever sleeping. One day "a majestic old man wearing a cloak" greeted Bu Bakr with "salaam" and then asked him why he wasn't going to the Maqām-e Ebrāhim⁵⁶ "where the people have gathered to hear Traditions of the Prophet. ...an old man of great distinction had come who possessed exalted⁵⁷ Traditions and was dictating them." Bu Bakr replied: "Whatever they are reciting over there as a Tradition with a chain of transmission, I hear without the chain of transmission right here." The old man asks: "Who do you hear it from?" "*My heart reports to me from my Lord.*" "What proof is there that you are capable of this?" Bu Bakr replied: "The proof is I know you are *Keẓr*⁵⁸." *Keẓr* said: "Up until that time I imagined there was no Friend of God (*vali*) I didn't know. That was until I met Shaikh Bu Bakr-e Kattāni, for he recognized me but I did not recognize him." The anecdote portrays the *vali* Bu Bakr-e Kattāni

as being one up on the supernatural Keẓr and offers this as proof that *valis* receive direct enlightenment from God which has the same authority as Traditions from the Prophet.

Dealing with the same theme -- a *vali* receiving direct knowledge from God -- is the anecdote in which a jurist (a pillar of the religious establishment) who listens to the Shaikh's discourse, finds that the Shaikh is saying things which are not found in the seven sections of the holy Qor'ān.⁵⁹ The Shaikh remarks: "What I am saying is found in the eighth of the seven sections of the Qor'ān." The jurist asks what that might be and the Shaikh replies: "The seven sections are referred to in the verse: '*Oh Prophet, make known what has been sent down to you.*'"⁶⁰ And the eighth of the seven sections is this: '*And He revealed to His servant that which He revealed.*'"⁶¹ What was sent down to Moḥammad... consists of the Qor'ān's seven sections. However, what He sends into the hearts of His servants knows no number or limit and is never cut off. Every instant a messenger is sent into the heart of His servants..." The Shaikh is here portrayed as saying that the process of divine revelation is still going on. In his day and age *valis*, rather than prophets, enjoy this privileged relationship with God, and this naturally raises them to a superior level with regard to the '*olamā*' who are merely the custodians of earlier revelation. Subjective mystic experience is thereby integrated into an Islamic framework, legitimized, and accorded the transcendent status of new revelation.

The Shaikh, however, is not just another *vali* -- another Bu Bakr-e Kattāni for instance. The Shaikh is the last of the *valis* which by analogy with the Prophet Moḥammad accords him the highest rank amongst all the *valis* who have appeared since the close of the historical cycle of prophecy. In Book One, we saw how Beṣr-e Yāsin met Abu Sa'īd as a child and recognized that he was destined to be the seal of the *valis*. Amongst the anecdotes of Book Two, two dreams serve as testimony to this unique spiritual status of the Shaikh's. The Shaikh himself reports that he beheld the Prophet in a dream and 'Ali, Joneyd and Šebli were seated in front of him.⁶² The Shaikh asks the Prophet: "Oh Prophet of God, what do you say concerning the Friends of God?" The Prophet, pointing to the famous persons seated around him, says they are Friends and adds: "But you are the last of them. When you have passed away, no one will remember this after you." And in another dream the Shaikh claims the Prophet told him: "Oh Bu Sa'īd, just as I, who am Moḥammad, was the last of the prophets, you are

the last of all the Friends of God. There shall be no *vali* after you. And he removed the ring from his blessed finger and gave it to me."⁶³

Such extravagant claims which one imagines were elaborated after the Shaikh's death by disciples and members of his family, would no doubt contribute to the prestige and popularity of the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine as a pilgrimage site.

THE SHAIKH AS A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR (*PIR*)

A fundamental aspect of the Shaikh's identity as he appears in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* is his role as *pir* or spiritual director within the setting of the *kānaqāh*. Here the emphasis is not on his function as protector of the Muslims or intercessor on behalf of the faithful before God. The job of a *pir* is to give individually tailored guidance to his intimate disciples who have renounced the world and set out on the mystic path. The *pir's* guidance may vary from assigning the *morid* (disciple) strenuous forms of self-mortification to solving a spiritual dilemma the aspiring devotee encounters during his development. If necessary, the *pir* may even intervene miraculously in the disciple's daily life. What goes on during this master-disciple relationship is best summed up under the broad heading of killing the *nafs* (Self). The more one withdraws from the world of creation (*kalq*) and subdues one's sense of existing separately from God, the closer one progresses towards the Real (*ḥaqq*). The objective is not, as in various forms of Neo-Platonism or Hindu mysticism, to isolate the divine element within oneself and achieve the realization that one's essential self is God. Orthodox Islam postulates an unbridgeable gap between the Creator whose attributes cannot be adequately defined or described, and His creation. By dissociating himself from all his creational aspects which are summed up in the *nafs*, and submitting to God's will, the mystic adept aims at achieving an intense closeness to Him such as can only be expressed through extreme utterances like: "*In the*⁶⁴ *robe there is only God!*"

ḤASAN-E MO'ADDEB

A representative example of the Shaikh functioning as a *pir* and assigning a task to a devotee in order to chastize his *nafs* is the anecdote about Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and the dripping innards.⁶⁵ Ḥasan, who is from a well-off background, is having difficulty

divesting himself of his lordliness (*k^vājagī*). Realizing this, the Shaikh selects a task especially calculated "to cause Ḥasan's remaining sense of worldly prestige and love of high rank to disappear." The Shaikh orders Ḥasan to go to the marketplace and buy all the tripe and organs on sale and carry them back to the *kānaqāh* by himself. It is a very humiliating experience for Ḥasan to be seen like this in public. "The blood and filth ran down his back and over his robe... Every moment Ḥasan died another death out of confusion and shame before the people..." When Ḥasan returns, the Shaikh sends him to a fountain at the other end of town to wash the innards. After carrying out the Shaikh's instructions: "...nothing of his lordliness and high position remained with him. He entered the *kānaqāh* as a free man with happy heart."

To complete the lesson, the Shaikh sends Ḥasan back to the bazaar to ask people if they had noticed him carrying the basket of innards. No one had seen him. The Shaikh comments: "Oh Ḥasan, you are the one who sees yourself, otherwise no one else is concerned with seeing you. It is your Self (*nafs*) that adorns you in your eye. You must subdue the Self. You must beat it and not stop beating it until it dies. And keep it so engaged with the Real (*ḥaqq*) that it has no concern for itself or other creatures (*kalq*)." That evening when the tripe is served to the darvishes in the *kānaqāh*, the Shaikh remarks: "Oh companions, eat your fill, for tonight you are eating a stew concocted from Ḥasan's lordly pride (*k^vājagī*)."

THE RUSTIC AND THE SERPENT

In another anecdote which deals with the theme of the Shaikh transforming a devotee's character, a rough fellow from the countryside has come to live in the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* in Nishapur.⁶⁶ He has no proper manners. He wears heavy shoes with metal on them and slams the door as he goes in and out. All his movements cause great annoyance to the other Sufis staying in the *kānaqāh*. The Shaikh decides to send the rustic darvish on an errand. He sends him to a particular spot in a mountain valley where he says: "One of my friends will come before you. Give him my greeting... He was my companion for seven years." The darvish is elated thinking: "I am going to see... one of the Friends of God... When his blessed glance falls on me, all my concerns, in this world and in the world to come, will be provided for by his grace." It turns

out that the "friend" he has been sent to greet is an enormous terrifying serpent. "When the darvish beheld this sight, his vital spirit left him and all his limbs went limp." In confusion, he blurts out the Shaikh's greetings. The huge serpent then grovels at his feet and weeps so much that the ground becomes drenched. When the darvish returns to the *kānaqāh* after this harrowing experience, he is a transformed person. "He entered the *kānaqāh* in such a way that no one noticed him come in. And he said 'salaam' so gently the companions could scarcely hear his voice. ...so great was the impression on the darvish that even several lifetimes of self-mortification and austerities and association with kind *pirs* could not have resulted in such good manners and refinement..."

HAMZA FROM AZJĀH

But sometimes the Shaikh deals with the problem the other way round. Ḥamza is a darvish from Azjāh and he comes to Meyhana whenever the Shaikh speaks before an assembly.⁶⁷ "Ḥamza was a very dear man and quick to grow passionate. But he was like a distraught lover." Ḥamza's psychic state causes him to behave in a manner similar to that of the rustic in the anecdote above. He bursts into the Sufis' "cell of retirement" at the hottest hour of the day (siesta time), raises a ruckus and slams the door against the wall in the roughest possible way. "All the darvishes were distressed by this disturbance and upset." They complain to the Shaikh. Summoning Ḥamza before him, the Shaikh says: "Oh Ḥamza, the darvishes are complaining about you. They say you disturb their 'states' and that you are not acquiring proper manners. What have you to answer to this?" Ḥamza retorts: "Oh Shaikh, since they do not have the strength to support the burden of Ḥamza, they should take off their porter's robes⁶⁸, for they put on the porter's robe in order to carry burdens." The Shaikh experiences a flush of joy and lets out a shout. He makes Ḥamza repeat what he said three times. Then the Shaikh orders Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to bring a tray of sugar. "With his own blessed hand the Shaikh poured sugar over Ḥamza's head, all the while letting out shouts..." The Shaikh is depicted as honoring Ḥamza because of the latter's passionate temperament which the Shaikh values more highly than the humility and refined manners Sufis generally seek to cultivate in the *kānaqāh*.

THE WAYWARD DISCIPLE

In one anecdote specifically concerned with the mutual obligations of the *pir* and the disciple, we have an example of the *pir's* supernatural intervention.⁶⁹ A darvish asks the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is the *pir's* right with respect to the disciple, and what is the disciple's right with respect to the *pir*?" The Shaikh gives no reply. The following day the Shaikh orders the darvish to set out for Ġaznin where he is to procure a sum of money and aloeswood. On the way the darvish stops in Herat and goes to the bath in the company of another darvish. In the bath his fancy is taken by a good looking boy he sees. The companion darvish says: "It requires some money. Then we can bring him to the room this evening and be with him in private." Later, however, after he's made all the necessary arrangements, the darvish's sinful intentions are foiled. "When he made advances on the boy, the darvish saw Shaikh Bu Sa'id emerge from one corner of the room, and the Shaikh shouted at him: 'Ho! Refrain from this deed!'" The darvish let out a shout and fell unconscious. When the darvish has seen to his errand and returned to Nishapur, the Shaikh tells him: "The *pir's* right with respect to the disciple is this. When you are told to go to Ġaznin for the benefit of the darvishes, you do so, in accordance with the *pir's* instructions. And the disciple's right with respect to the *pir* is this. When you commit an error like that along the way, the *pir* stops you from such an impropriety."

‘EMRĀN FROM TRANSOXANIA

Finally, I want to consider an anecdote which sets up a situation in which the Shaikh is made to appear as the chief of all *pirs*.⁷⁰ In Transoxania there is a group of Sufi *pirs* and shaikhs who spend the night meditating in a circle and when dawn comes, their leading *pir* gives answers to any difficulties or cares they have experienced in their hearts. ‘Emrān, "a man of passionate temper and a sincere lover", waits upon this group. One day he puts before them a dilemma which has been troubling him, in the hope that they will remove this spiritual barrier from his path. He tells them: "This is a strange matter. If I seek Him, He remarks: 'Oh you of no significance, where are you rushing to? Do you imagine you will reach Me?' And if I do not seek after Him, He says: 'Make haste!'"⁷¹ And if I seek anything else other than Him, He remarks: 'You are a polytheist.' And if I turn away, He says: 'You are an

apostate." 'Emrān presents this problem to the *pir* but neither the *pir* nor anyone else in the group can give him an answer. He cries out: "I have consumed a lifetime in a delusion. Today I took you to be great men of the mystic path. I tore away my veil and displayed my pain, thinking that you were physicians. But you have abandoned me to this pain -- and my veil has been torn away." Everyone present is upset. Finally, the *pir* recommends that 'Emrān go to see Shaikh Bu Sa'id in Khorasan. He will surely be able to help.

'Emrān sets out to visit the Shaikh. "He walked in a deranged state and had no thought of food." When 'Emrān reaches Meyhana, the Shaikh is discoursing before an assembly. The Shaikh has been expecting him. He welcomes 'Emrān and immediately gives him the answer to his dilemma: "Oh darvish, the mystic states are not of one and the same quality. Are you seeking Him or are you seeking from Him? The more than 120,000 prophets sought from Him. Until Moḥammad came into the world, no one had sought Him. The first to seek Him was Moḥammad... And God showed him gratitude in that: *'(the Prophet's) eyes did not swerve, nor did they turn aside.*'⁷² If you seek Him: *'The seeking is rejected and the path is blocked.'* But if you seek from Him, is it not enough for you that He has permitted you to talk of Him and to sit with His chosen people? Others He has put to sleep. You He has allowed into His royal court. He has busied others with seeking what is not He, while you He has busied with Himself and with serving His Friends." When 'Emrān reaches home and tells the Shaikh's answer to the spiritual masters: "All the *pirs* of Transoxania who had been seated there, got up and, out of respect for the Shaikh, placed their faces on the ground in the direction of Meyhana."

The distinction the Shaikh has made concerns the different grades of experience accessible to travelers on the mystic path. Reaching the goal in the absolute sense corresponds to the Prophet Moḥammad's "night journey" (*me'rāḥ*) which is alluded to in the Qor'ān. According to some *ḥadīṣ* and later literature, the Prophet ascended to Heaven riding on the mythical beast, Borāq, and beheld God directly as no one before had ever achieved. The mystics take this to be the prototype of the beatific vision. In a similar vein, the Shaikh here states that the Prophet, as a reward for his exceptional striving after God, was granted the power to experience the unique mystic vision alluded to in the Qor'ān (53/13-18): "He beheld him once again at the *sidrah-tree*, beyond which no one

Translator's Introduction

may pass... When that tree was covered with what covered it, his eyes did not swerve, nor did they turn aside; for he saw some of his Lord's greatest signs." In this way the famous Qor'ānic passage about Moḥammad's sight not swerving or turning away on this occasion of heightened religious experience acquires a specifically Sufi dimension. However, the Prophet and the *valis* who followed in his wake represent the rarest exceptions amongst mankind. They are God's chosen few. Otherwise, as the Shaikh explains to 'Emrān, seeking God rather than seeking something from God is a virtual impossibility. Devotees like 'Emrān who have not been given the higher grace necessary to attain the pinnacle of mystic experience, should nonetheless be thankful for the privileged relationship they enjoy with God. These "sincere lovers" have not been put to sleep like the mass of people. They are allowed to talk to God and sit with His chosen people and serve His Friends. This view attempts to accommodate "waiting upon" the darvishes and being attached to *pirs* within a hierarchical framework, while making it clear that not everyone who sets out on the mystic path is destined to attain to ultimate "unveiling".

THE SHAIKH AND MEN OF WORLDLY POWER

When we turn from the Shaikh's dealings with the religious establishment and his disciples, to consider anecdotes which portray the Shaikh in relation to the political and military powers of his day, two characteristics are especially prominent. Firstly, the Shaikh is represented as giving them their appointment in the spiritual sense, i.e. due to the Shaikh giving them his blessing or actually assigning them their office, mechanisms are set in motion in the world of real events and these particular protégés of the Shaikh come to hold the political office in question. The other common feature of anecdotes dealing with statesmen and rulers is what I would like to call "*récupération*". Famous historical events are appropriated and presented as having happened the way they did because of the Shaikh. The battle of Dandānqān in which the Gaznavids are defeated by the Saljuq Turks and lose their hold over Khorasan, the rise to power of the brothers ʿŢoḡrel and Čaḡri as leaders of the Saljuq Turks, and the long career of Neẓām al-Molk as the most prominent vezier of the Saljuqs, are all attributed to the Shaikh's spiritual intervention. In some cases both these characteristics -- appointment and "*récupération*" -- may occur in an anecdote at the same time.

NEẒĀM AL-MOLK

In the simplest form we have the anecdote in which Neẓām al-Molk appears as a young man wearing a handsome, stylish belt.⁷³ He attends the Shaikh's assembly and, as often happens to members of the audience, he is moved to make a donation and donates his fine belt. The Shaikh predicts: "It will not be long before you have 4000 men buckling their belts in your service..." This is in fact an appointment. Later in life Neẓām al-Molk testifies: "Today I reviewed my army. The men come to 4000 strong... not one man more, nor one less. Whatever power I have acquired, I acquired through the Shaikh and for that reason I am the servant of all the Sufis in the world." Neẓām al-Molk was indeed famous for his patronage of religious studies. It is here explained that he has been good to Sufis because of the Shaikh. But the anecdotes can go further in spelling out how Neẓām al-Molk's role as patron of religion is wholly due to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd.

In another anecdote⁷⁴ which dramatizes the relationship between Neẓām al-Molk and the Shaikh, we also find an element of "*récupération*". Neẓām al-Molk supports a *kānaqāh* in Isfahan but one year at the usual time when he distributes his largess to "religious scholars, sayyeds, Sufis and other people with needs, and grant holders", several months go by before he is able to carry out his intentions. Finally, he summons the religious leaders and tells them about the special mission Shaikh Abu Sa'īd had assigned him. When he was himself a young student of the religious sciences, he made a visit to the Shaikh in Meyhana. As he was arriving on the road from Azjāh, he was met by a horde of the Shaikh's disciples. The Shaikh had said to them: "Whoever wishes to see the young man who will devour this world with success and conquer the world to come, go out to the Azjāh road to welcome him." When Neẓām al-Molk meets the Shaikh in person, the Shaikh says: "Lordship over the world has been assured for you. Give yourself to action, for action summons you. On the path you are presently traveling nothing has been allotted you. Soon, however, students of the religious sciences shall reach their goals due to you. Do you give me your word you will cherish the mystic community?" The Shaikh is about to appoint Neẓām al-Molk but on the explicit condition that he look after the Sufis. Before leaving the Shaikh's presence Neẓām al-Molk asks whether there will be some sign "when this work the Shaikh has commanded" is about to end. The Shaikh replies: "Yes, there is. At whatever time divine assistance

Translator's Introduction

(*towfiq*) is withdrawn, the end of your life is at hand." Neẓām al-Molk explains to his religious clients that that moment has come. For the last few months God has not accorded him divine assistance. Now, for the last time, he orders their stipends to be paid out. He then sets out to join the sultan and when he reaches Nahāvand, he is assassinated by the "heretics" (an Esmā'ili). The anecdote directly relates Neẓām al-Molk's career of patronage and the historical circumstances of his death to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd.

HĀJEB MOḤAMMAD, THE 'AMID OF KHORASAN

There are two anecdotes⁷⁵ which involve the 'amid of Khorasan (the important official responsible for tax collection) and the Shaikh. In the first, the 'amid tells of his relationship with the Shaikh. "...I was a simple cavalryman... Twice every day I would pass by the door of Shaikh Bu Sa'īd-e Bu'l-Keyr's *kānaqāh* and take a look inside. The days I saw the Shaikh, turned out to be auspicious." Later, the future 'amid beseeches the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, take me into your good graces." The Shaikh holds him by the hand and says: "It is done. Go in peace." The 'amid continues: "After that day, no one had the upper hand over me. I lived in security. Though I incurred expenses, they were always within my means. I never had to undergo hardships, and from that day my power went on increasing." The anecdote concludes: "When he left that day, the Shaikh said: 'What achievements await that man in the future!'" In the second anecdote about the 'amid, who was originally known as Hājeb Moḥammad, the account concludes: "Hājeb Moḥammad became the 'amid of Khorasan, and for sixty years he received the taxes of Khorasan." And the 'amid himself adds: "I have been appointed by Shaikh Bu Sa'īd to the post of 'amid of Khorasan."

EBRĀHIM INĀL

A case of "*récupération*" of a historical figure's unsuccessful revolt and consequent execution is to be found in an anecdote dealing with Ebrāhim Ināl, the younger brother of the Saljuq sultan, Ṭoğrel.⁷⁶ He is the wicked chief of police (*ṣaḥna*) of Nishapur and is causing great suffering to the people of the city. Suddenly one day, he attends the Shaikh's assembly and weeps profusely. He says to the Shaikh: "Accept me." Three times the Shaikh refuses, each time giving a different reason why it would not be good for

Ebrāhim Ināl. He will lose his wealth, his rank of prince, and finally, his very life. To each of these "conditions" Ebrāhim replies: "Let it be so!" The Shaikh then gives Ebrāhim a piece of paper which has written on it: "*Ebrāhim is one of us*" and is signed by the Shaikh. Immediately thereafter, Ebrāhim Ināl rises in revolt against his brother. He is eventually captured and executed. Before his death he begs to be buried with his pouch which contains the Shaikh's certificate of acceptance. The technique of "*récupération*" gives us to believe that the historical facts of Ebrāhim's revolt against Ṭoḡrel, and his eventual execution, were due to a "spiritual deal" he had made with Shaikh Abu Sa'id in order to be "accepted" by the latter.

Finally, the best example of an appointment motif in combination with historical "*récupération*" is the anecdote dealing with Ṭoḡrel and Čaḡri and the battle of Dandānqān. It begins: "When the house of Saljuq came forth from Nur-e Bokārā⁷⁷ in rebellion and arrived in Khorasan... many people gathered around them and they conquered the greater part of Khorasan."⁷⁸ At this point we are given a moral-historical explanation. "The cause of this was that Mas'ud, the sultan of that period, had neglected his dominion and pre-occupied himself with depravity." The rest of the anecdote, however, contrives to offer us a spiritual explanation of history. The sultan sends a royal decree threatening the Saljuqs. They reply: "This matter lies with God... May it turn out as He wills." The Shaikh knows through his clairvoyance exactly what will happen. Before the decisive military confrontation takes place, Ṭoḡrel and Čaḡri, the two brothers who are the leaders of the Saljuq tribes, come to see the Shaikh in Meyhana. They make obeisance to the Shaikh who is seated on his raised platform. The Shaikh lowers his head for a moment. Then he raises his head and says to Čaḡri: "I have given you dominion over Khorasan." And he says to Ṭoḡrel: "I have given you dominion over Iraq⁷⁹." So much for the familiar stereotyped appointments.

In the second phase of the anecdote, Sultan Mas'ud is portrayed as on his way to do battle with the Saljuqs but he stops to lay siege to the walled town of Meyhana. The siege goes on for forty days and a group of expert archers (*ḥokm-andāz*) inside Meyhana kill and wound many notables in the sultan's army. Meanwhile, one night the Shaikh tells his servant Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to climb down the fortification wall and go to a nearby village to fetch a large pot of clarified butter. The next day the Shaikh orders braziers and cooking pots to be set up in the street

and has the butter brought to a boil. A peace settlement is reached but the sultan punishes the archers by having each one's right hand cut off. "They then came and dipped their mutilated arms into the boiling butter. The Shaikh wept. Tears flowed from his eyes as he said: 'Mas'ud has cut off the hand of his dominion.'" Thereupon, the sultan sets out to engage the Saljuq forces. The two armies join battle at Dandānqān-by-Marv and Mas'ud is defeated. Thus, the actual rise to power of Ṭoġrel and Čaġri and the famous defeat of Mas'ud's large army at Dandānqān are neatly fitted into a spiritual framework which puts Shaikh Abu Sa'id at the center of the great historical events of his time.

THE SHAIKH'S "SANCTIFIED SEPULCHRAL SHRINE" AT MEYHANA

Ebn-e Monavvar was the great-great-grandson of Shaikh Abu Sa'id. In his introduction he states that "from early childhood and youth's first flowering" he was intent on collecting "the auspicious and beneficial sayings (*favā'id*), the propitious deeds and mystic stations"⁸⁰ of his illustrious ancestor. He specifically says: "And this information I sought from spiritual masters, and the sons and the most notable grandsons of the Shaikh..."⁸¹ And Ebn-e Monavvar would have been in a good position to gather such information from the Shaikh's descendants since he himself must have been raised at the Shaikh's shrine in Meyhana. In Book Three he tells us that his father, Nur al-Din-e Monavvar, was "...custodian of the Shaikh's sanctuary and *pir* and leader of our Shaikh's offspring..."⁸², that is to say, his father was in charge of running the shrine and was head of the large family which formed a community around the shrine. "...nor did anyone attain the success which he acquired and attained in building up this blessed sanctuary and in satisfying the hearts of the resident group and the visiting darvishes."⁸³ On the basis of the shrine's agricultural income and donations from pilgrims, Nur al-Din was able to house and feed a permanent group of devotees, as well as look after transient, "foreign" darvishes.

Ebn-e Monavvar also explains that it was imperative that he collect these accounts of the Shaikh's deeds and sayings because so many members of the Shaikh's immediate family had died when the Gozz plundered Meyhana. "...in Meyhana itself one hundred and fifteen of the Shaikh's descendants, young and old alike -- whose lineage goes back to the Shaikh -- ...met with destruction or

were martyred by the sword. That figure does not include those who were martyred in other cities or did not survive the famine and pestilence which followed upon the calamity."⁸⁴ Because of the reduction of the family's size, there was a danger that information about the Shaikh would die out. Besides lamenting the great massacre, Ebn-e Monavvar appears to be saying that the extended family residing around the shrine was the most important environment in which traditions concerning the Shaikh were kept alive, and the chief source he drew upon when compiling the *Asrār al-Towḥid*.

The random passages in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* referring to the Shaikh's shrine are of interest as early evidence of the function and influence of a shrine community. In later centuries a shrine such as that of Shaikh Ṣafi al-Din (d. 1334) at Ardabil, by providing great prestige to Ṣafi al-Din's descendants, played an important role in the rise to power of the Ṣafavid dynasty in Iran, and eventually accumulated great wealth through pious donations and the dynasty's endowments. In view of the historical importance of shrines and in order to have a better idea of the surroundings in which the content of the *Asrār al-Towḥid* took shape, it is perhaps worth looking more closely at the few passages in the text which specifically refer to the Shaikh's shrine and the family community attached to it.

First of all, in Book Three a list is given of what the cult practices at the shrine were. We are told that the following was never lacking: "...five ritual prayers in congregation, food served mornings and at night, every morning a recital of the whole Qor'ān at his sanctified tomb, candles every evening until bedtime and every dawn until daylight, providing Qor'ānic reciters morning and evenings, and a group of Sufis resident at his sanctified tomb amounting to more than one hundred persons from among his offspring and devotees." And then the spiritual benefits to be had at the shrine, especially by the pilgrims who made the journey to Meyhana, are described: "...every day spiritual inspiration, relief and bounty would appear once again. And every year⁸⁵ men of distinction would come to this generous Presence from all over the world and the *samā'* was continually performed and robes were thrown off in ecstasy. Whoever... experienced some difficulty on the mystic path, would have it solved by this lofty Presence or by his offspring."⁸⁶

One man of distinction who is portrayed as visiting the shrine, is Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri. We have already met him several times in the early anecdotes of Book Two where his great

prestige as a learned Sufi is exploited and made to serve as testimony to the Shaikh's spiritual superiority. In a similar vein, he appears as visiting the Shaikh's tomb in Meyhana immediately after the Shaikh's death. On that occasion the Shaikh's family goes forth from Meyhana to meet him and escort him into the town. The description is very colorful. When Qoşeyri and his followers meet the Shaikh's family, reciters who are on hand begin to chant, ecstatic states are experienced, and all throw off their patched frocks. "And so they proceeded to our Shaikh's tomb. And the reciters chanted and the darvishes rolled on the ground and ecstatic states occurred."⁸⁷

After the first Ğozz attack on Meyhana in 1154, all this came to a halt. Sultan Sanjar was defeated and held prisoner by the Ğozz for almost three years. When the sultan was released in 1156 and came back to Marv, his capital, Ebn-e Monavvar went to see him: "...to congratulate the sultan on his arrival, and out of concern for the needs of the Shaikh's sanctuary. None of the Shaikh's kinsmen or offspring was with this well-wisher, for those who were left, were scattered abroad and most had gone to Iraq."⁸⁸ Ebn-e Monavvar has come to Sultan Sanjar as a representative of the Shaikh's family and shrine but as such his prestige seems to entail even greater privileges. What Ebn-e Monavvar goes on to relate, even allowing for some degree of exaggeration, illustrates very aptly the aristocratic function and the extent of power of the Shaikh's family in their local area -- Meyhana was the administrative capital of the province or district of Kābarān:

"When this well-wisher arrived in Marv, the headman of Meyhana... had arrived a few days before on behalf of the needs of the province, but he had still not seen the sultan. ...at all times in the past only the Shaikh's offspring had the power to speak about the needs of the province... The headman (*ra'is*), the tax collector (*'āmel*), the prefect of police (*şahna*), and whoever was empowered to act in that province, could only act at the instruction of the Shaikh's offspring. And if anyone committed an injustice against somebody in that province, the chief and *pir* of the Shaikh's offspring only had to write: 'So-and-so ought not to be in Kābarān...' As soon as the letter was presented to the sultan, a command would be written for that person's dismissal."⁸⁹

The headman of Meyhana is glad to see Ebn-e Monavvar and remarks: "Now that you have arrived, the sultan will see us tomorrow." And when they are granted an audience with Sultan Sanjar, the sultan begins by saying: "Meyhana is a blessed place and there

can be no tomb more venerable and esteemed than that of the Shaikh's." The sultan then goes on to tell of a miracle, the effect of which he witnessed himself while he was a prisoner in the Ġozz military camp. During the plundering of Meyhana, one of the Ġozz marauders intended to dig up the Shaikh's grave in search of treasure. "When he put his hand on the tomb, he immediately turned to stone. His kinsmen brought the stone back to the military camp and I saw the stone." Even Ebn-e Monavvar seems taken aback by this miracle and, after giving the sultan's account, adds that he'd only heard this from Sultan Sanjar and no one else.⁹⁰

Ebn-e Monavvar goes on to mention that to help ease conditions after the Ġozz catastrophe, the sultan gave 1000 ass-loads of seed for the province of *Kābarān* and 100 ass-loads of seed for the fields of the Shaikh's shrine in Meyhana. And the sultan also ordered: "...give this fellow (Ebn-e Monavvar) one hundred dinars in cash on behalf of the sepulchral shrine, so that he may spend part of it on oxen for the shrine's fields and part of it for building and providing meals."⁹¹ It is interesting to note that the shrine has its own fields for agriculture which add to its income. One would like to know more details about how the shrine acquired and managed land holdings. This material aspect of a shrine's functions becomes very important for the power which shrines come to exercise at a later date. Ebn-e Monavvar takes the money and sees that the fields are cultivated, and sends for other offspring of the Shaikh and devotees who are still alive. "A body of fifty persons gathered together." Consequently, the cult practices are resumed at the shrine and pilgrims and Sufis begin arriving again. But one year after his release from captivity Sultan Sanjar died (1157) and the following year his nephew and successor Sultan Maḥmud was defeated by the Ġozz near Marv (Nov. 1158). Once again the Ġozz went on the rampage. "On this occasion the sanctuary was utterly destroyed..."⁹²

In an anecdote which is set earlier in time, Shaikh Maḥdi-ye Pāruzi visits the shrine.⁹³ He is not mentioned in other sources⁹⁴ but is presented in the anecdote as an important spiritual personality. "Sultan Sanjar... was his devotee and all the sultan's entourage and the army were devoted to him as well. He was endowed with intense ecstatic states and accepted by men of worldly power." This remark is interesting as an indication of individual holy men's popularity amongst the military elite, a relationship which is destined to develop over the centuries and can assume

importance in internal dynastic struggles. Shaikh Mahdi insists on spending his first night in Meyhana inside the shrine where he intends to stay awake and perform devotions. Normally the shrine is locked up at night. The Shaikh himself has said: "At night it is the turn of the Jinn who reside close by my tomb." Shaikh Mahdi is locked inside the shrine but, a little later, he is miraculously transported into the street without the shrine door being unlocked.

Further details about the Jinn are given: "At midnight when the door of the sepulchral shrine is closed and under lock and key, anyone who listens, will hear the sound of the cover of the containers of the Qor'ānic fascicles⁹⁵ which have been placed on top of the tomb, and will perceive the walking and movement of a group." The group referred to consists of the supernatural spirits who perform the cult practices inside the shrine during the night.

Needless to say, the shrine is concerned to promote its own importance as a pilgrimage site. An anecdote which attempts to rate the pilgrimage to Meyhana more highly than the pilgrimage to Mecca is presented as the testimony of the famous religious scholar Tāj al-Eslām Abu Sa'd al-Sam'āni (d. 1166).⁹⁶ He and his father go to Mecca on pilgrimage and while there they take the opportunity to visit the eminent Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari who resides in "the *kānaqāh* of Mecca". He is famous for his miraculous powers and, as the anecdote informs us, regularly associates with *Keẓr*, the supernatural guide of Sufis. When father and son find Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek, he is seated chopping up stones in order to smooth the surface of a road which pilgrims use. The father greets him, introducing himself by name and states that he comes from Marv. 'Abd al-Malek replies: "I know", and then asks: "Have you come to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca?" "Yes, I have", answers the father. "Haven't you been to Meyhana?" "Yes." "Didn't you make the pilgrimage to Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-*Keyr*?" "I did." Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari concludes: "Then what are you doing here? And why have you come this long way?" Tāj al-Eslām-e Sam'āni, the famous son adds: "Ever since that time when I heard these words, I have taken it upon myself as a duty that every year when people set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca, I go on pilgrimage to the Shaikh in Meyhana."

As one might well expect, the sanctified shrine itself was an appropriate setting for a number of miracles. When Ebn-e Monavvar visits the shrine, apparently many years after its final destruction, he meets Awḥad al-Ṭāyefa.⁹⁷ The latter was a cripple who remained behind when Meyhana was completely abandoned

for a year or two during the Gozz raids. Ebn-e Monavvar describes him as "born of one of the slaves of this well-wisher's grandfather." Awḥad al-Ṭāyefa "took refuge at the door of the sepulchral shrine" and, during that troubled period, he was constantly supplied with food by travelers and sent gifts by the pious. He states: "That year or two was the best of my life and I will never forget that ease and enjoyment." Ebn-e Monavvar asks whether he had experienced other miracles at the shrine. Awḥad al-Ṭāyefa tells of two particular miracles, the first being that one moonlit summer night while he was sleeping in front of the shrine, he heard the Shaikh reciting the Qor'ān inside the locked up tomb area. He woke a darvish who was sleeping beside him but "...this voice went under the veil. Neither I could hear it, nor could the man." The second account involves the miraculous appearance of a pitcher of water and two pieces of bread at a time when he hadn't eaten for several days "As long as I have lived, I have never tasted food that was more delicious than that..." He didn't get hungry again for the next two days.

Reports like these are interesting as examples of the hagiographical tradition growing before our eyes. Whereas Sultan Sanjar's miracle is blunt statement of fact: "...and I saw the stone", Awḥad al-Ṭāyefa's reports have already taken on some of the qualities of full-fledged anecdotes. They contain details which serve to enhance the literary effect of the narrative, details which don't have to do directly with the miracle *per se* but which make the miracle all the more wondrous. Clearly, during his years of "service" at the shrine, Awḥad al-Ṭāyefa has had occasion to retell and polish up his miracles before Ebn-e Monavvar noted them down and included them in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine Ebn-e Monavvar inventing the circumstantial detail in these accounts. However, many of the anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*, whose informants are mentioned, are accounts associated with an important member of the Shaikh's immediate family which points to the family environment of the shrine as the chief source for manufacturing and preserving the biographical materials which Ebn-e Monavvar collected. But that was during the hundred years or more between the time of the Shaikh's death and Meyhana's destruction by the Gozz. Meyhana slowly recovered as a pilgrimage site during the 13th century. Meier has collected several references to the shrine's existence at a later date.⁹⁸

SUFISM IN THE *ASRĀR AL-TOWHĪD*

"Sufism is at once the religious philosophy and the popular religion of Islam. The great Mohammadan mystics are also saints." R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (p.65).

To the above observation of Nicholson may be added one of the definitions of Sufism Shaikh Abu Sa'id repeatedly enunciated. The Shaikh when asked: "What is it to be a Sufi?", would give the cavalier reply: "Whatever you have in your head, you put aside. Whatever you have in your hand, you give away. And you do not flee from what befalls you." Many such sweeping summations are attributed to famous figures in the early development of Sufism. Obviously, pithy maxims of this type are not meant to be scholastic definitions covering every aspect of the conventionalized teachings and practices of Sufism which, in any case, went on evolving over several centuries. These "definitions" are in fact addressed to an audience already familiar with the varied currents of thought and accumulated experience embodied in Sufism. For the person who knows little or nothing about Sufism, they are not of much use as an introduction to so complex and specialized a subject. Therefore, for the purpose of helping the reader who is unfamiliar with the clichés of Islamic mysticism, it might be useful to review some of the more common features of Sufism's repertoire of theosophical-psychological themes -- at least those themes and key terms which frequently recur in the text of the *Asrār al-Towhīd*.

Sufism, derived from the Arabic *ṣuf* for wool which ascetics and mystics donned as a sign of their having rejected the world, is the general term used to designate Islamic mysticism. As such its historical origins have not been clearly mapped out by scholars, nor has it at any time presented a rigidly systematized corpus of doctrines and beliefs. The earliest figures whose deeds and sayings the Sufi tradition transmits appear to have been pious ascetics who withdrew from daily life and increased their religious devotions beyond what is prescribed by Islamic law. Later generations of Sufis, particularly throughout the 9th and 10th centuries, came to emphasize the emotional, experiential aspects of religion in contrast to the pronounced legalistic dimension of Islam. In addition to passionate commitment, a theosophical dimension was eventually assimilated into Sufism, as exemplified early on by the writings of Joneyd of Baghdad (d. 909), some of whose maxims are in-

cluded in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*. Since much of what Shaikh Abu Sa'īd is portrayed as saying and doing belongs to the general heritage of Sufism, I would like to present a representative sample of some of the common Sufi attitudes and teachings, which appear scattered throughout the text, and draw the reader's attention to their thematic nature -- many of the ideas being formulated as contrasting pairs. What follows is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of the contents of Sufism but merely to alert the reader to what were already traditional Sufi commonplaces by Abu Sa'īd's day and age.

It should, however, be indicated at the outset that in order to give Sufi beliefs and practices an air of Islamic legitimacy, Sufis have projected back onto the Prophet Moḥammad what were clearly spiritual developments of later centuries in Islam. Consequently, they interpret Moḥammad's nocturnal ascension (*me'rāṭ*) to Heaven to behold God directly, which is mentioned in the Qor'ān, as a beatific vision which is the source of Sufism's esoteric content. The term *towḥid*, which Ebn-e Monavvar has employed in the title of his compilation, is the central concept of Sufism. *Towḥid*, which in its primary sense refers to professing that there is no god but Allah, acquires an extended, metaphysical sense in Sufism. Whereas the fundamental outward (*zāher*) message of the Prophet Moḥammad was that there is only one God, the esoteric core (*bāṭen*) of Islam, according to Sufi doctrine, is the knowledge that only God, designated as *ḥaqq*, possesses real existence. The return to God consists of withdrawing from "the created" realm and achieving the psychic realization that God alone is existent and everlasting. Indeed, this esoteric teaching is taken to constitute the higher meaning of Islam, access to which can only be attained through spiritual initiation. It goes without saying that giving up attachment to the world and its material values (*kalq*) is a necessary precondition to pursuing the mystic path and reaching the Real (*ḥaqq*).

And for traveling the path a guide is necessary, a guide who is sensitive to the individual's spiritual deficiencies and who is capable of assigning him tasks suited to his psychic state. This associative bond between the *pir* (elder) and the *morid* (disciple) is essential to the practice of Sufism. What is being aimed for while traveling the path is, in the simplest terms, the elimination of the subject's sense of having an identity separate from God, i.e. the subject's Self (*nafs*) must be broken and subdued. The purpose and result of successfully eliminating the Self is to draw closer to the

Translator's Introduction

Divine Presence and to experience God as acting in place of one's own ego.

However, whatever particular feats of self-mortification or forms of "service" to other darvishes or one's fellow man the devotee performs, he must be endowed with an attitude of mind conventionally described as sincerity (*eklāṣ*) and truthfulness (*ṣedq*). The "hireling", i.e. the person motivated out of self-interest and a desire for reward, is following the prescriptions of Islamic law. By contrast, the higher striving consists of being God's bondsman, His servant, "the lover", whose motivation is based on rendering disinterested service out of a sense of God's beauty and perfection. Ideally from the Sufi point of view, any act of religious observance must involve the devotee's emotions. *"It should be a mystical experience (vāred) for you, not a devotional exercise (verd)." To act in this manner is to follow a divine attraction (kaṣeṣ), not to endeavor out of one's own initiative (kuṣeṣ), and requires that the aspirant submit completely to God's will (taslim). The traveler on the path cannot plan or deliberate on what strategies to adopt vis-à-vis God. Planning one's affairs (tadbir) is tantamount to duplicity. Love's passion (ʿeṣq) must leave no place for reason (ʿaql) to intervene. As with the sincere lover, an overriding sense of need must dominate the devotee's consciousness -- a need for God to the exclusion of all else.*

The *Asrār al-Towhīd* presents illustrations of these and other Sufi motifs in great profusion. The point the Shaikh makes most frequently and most urgently is summed up in the pithy saying: *"Sacrifice the Self (nafs). If not, then no!"* Commenting on the famous Sufi maxim: *"He who knows himself, knows his Lord God"*, the Shaikh declares: *"He who knows his Self is nothingness, knows his Lord God is what is."* The Self is to be eliminated at all costs because: *"Wherever your consciousness of Self exists is Hell, and wherever you no longer exist is Paradise."* Similarly, when the Shaikh is asked to interpret the Tradition: *"One hour of reflection is better than a year's devotional practices"*, he replies: *"An hour reflecting on one's own non-existence is better than a year of religious devotions with the thought that one exists."* Self and "you-ness" are equated. *"Sufism is abandoning affectation."* And there is no greater affectation on your part than 'you-ness', for while you are busy with yourself, you are cut off from Him."

Whereas the Shaikh denigrates the Self, he recommends the sense of need: *"Being God's bondsman consists of two things: perfection of need (efteqār) for God... and imitation of the example of*

the Prophet... and that is something in which there is no ease or pleasure for the Self." "Wherever the Self (*nafs*) prevails, it is not breath (*nafas*) but smoke of a baker's oven that is exhaled from the bodily frame." Submission to God's will transforms our contaminated breath. "When the Self is vanquished and subdued by the light of submission to God's will, then the breaths from the bodily frame are pure and of good faith, like the breeze of the east wind that passes through a rose garden." The theme of need is frequently associated with subduing the Self. "The living fire is the fire of need which He has placed in the hearts of His servants in this world, so that their Self is burned, and that is a luminous fire." But theory is not enough. "This is not a task that reaches fulfillment through words. Until you cut, blood will not flow. This task can only be brought to completion through need. There must be need! There must be need!"

The Shaikh also speaks of the ego, the "I", in the same derogatory terms as the Self. "Oh Muslims, how long will you go on with 'I' and 'I'? Be ashamed of yourselves and stop! Whatever you cannot say on resurrection day, don't say here and now, for it will be an affliction upon you." When the devotee progresses on the mystic path, his ego and his sense of having distinct wants drop away. "Then the servant realizes... it is not fitting for him to say 'me' or 'by me'. In this station the servant experiences an impotence and his wants fall away from him. The servant becomes free and at peace. Then the servant wants what He wants. The servant's will is gone and the servant is free from his own wants. He is at peace in the two worlds. He has found rest. All is He and you are nobody." Indeed, attaining one's own wants is the worst thing that can happen to a person. The Shaikh exclaims: "May I not see you reach the desired end, for whoever's desire has been placed in his lap, has been put out the door. Wash your hands of whoever remains concerned with his own desires and dislikes, for he is an affliction to himself and to men at large."

The theme of subduing the Self is closely related to the fundamental opposition expressed by the paired terms "creation" and "the Real" (*kalq/ḥaqq*). "Whoever looks at God's creatures with a creature's (*kalq*) eye, his quarrel with them will be long. But whoever looks upon creatures with the eye of the Truth (*ḥaqq*), will experience peace with regard to them." The Sufis would like to avoid the contamination of creation. Therefore, they address God as *ḥaqq*. "The Sufis call Him the Real (*ḥaqq*) because they do not defile their hands with anything that is not God, nor do they con-

Translator's Introduction

sider anything but Him. Therefore, the word they use, that is the Real, is more pure." Divesting oneself of a sense of existence apart from God is to undo all one's sensory ties with the created realm in order to return to the Real, the source of all creation. *Towḥid*, as God's mystical Oneness, is the central concept in Sufism which accords a supreme ontological status to God. Nothing but God has real existence. The Shaikh quotes Joneyd: "The Oneness of God (*towḥid*) which is professed by the Sufis, consists of: separating the created from the non-created, going forth from one's native land, rejecting attachments, and putting aside what one knows and what one does not know, so that in place of all this there is the Real."

Being attached to the world, i.e. functioning in the world on the basis of attributing real existence to creation and creatures, implies a betrayal of man's covenant with God. "Whatever occupies you, even if it is only a needle, for you that is the 'world'. And whatever is 'the world' for you, is your affliction and distractedness. Whatever is your distractedness, constitutes your falling away from 'this higher meaning', both in this world and in the world to come." In view of man's dilemma, poverty in the sense of renunciation of worldly wealth and standing is the only suitable condition in life. "It is part of the poor man's superiority over the rich that at the time of death and on the resurrection day everyone wishes to be poor for this is the state of truthfulness, and no one at that time wishes for riches." From the mystic point of view, one must not be occupied with anything other than God.

Nothing signifies more clearly failure to live in the knowledge that only God is real, than a person's efforts at planning his life and deliberating over what course of action to take. Planning is a direct contravention of the doctrine of submission to God's will. Someone asked the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what planning of our affairs (*tadbir*) is right for us?" The Shaikh replied: "*Planning is perdition. In matters of love planning is duplicity.*" And the Shaikh remarks: "*Deliverance lies in submission, whereas affliction is in planning.*" "*No one will find salvation until he becomes like the inhabitants of the grave concerning planning, for God... created mankind in destitution without any resources. The happiest of people is the man whom God has made see the paltriness of his own resources.*" When a disciple asks a spiritual master to invoke God's blessing on his behalf, the master replies: "My son, voluntary submission to what has fallen to your lot in pre-eternity⁹⁹, is better than opposing the moment." In this extreme case even in-

voking a blessing is considered to be a form of interfering with what God has decreed will happen to you.

The opposite of planning one's affairs is to be on the alert to what may arrive each moment in the way of spiritual directives or inspiration. The Shaikh quotes his own *pir*, Abu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan, on the notion of the present moment (*vaqt*): "One should not remember the past and one should not look forward to the future. It is the present moment that counts. And this is the nature of being God's bondsman." On one occasion a person who witnesses the Shaikh's powers of clairvoyance, exclaims: "What lordliness this is! This is all lordliness!" But the Shaikh corrects him, saying: "No, you are mistaken. This is sheer lack of power to choose (*bi-ek-tiyār*)!" The Shaikh's powers are the result of absolute renunciation of Self and submission to God's will. We are deluded when we think we seek God through a decision of our own will. "If He has predetermined it, He will move you to seek Him. In truth, it is He Who seeks you. Only afterwards does He move you to seek Him as well." Our will doesn't enter into the process. "Sufism is the will of God at work among His creatures without the intervention of creatures." It is our intellect which deludes us into thinking we are actively seeking God. The Shaikh notes that scholars claim we must know God through the intellect but referring to Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni's experience, the Shaikh says: "...when Bu'l-Ḥasan looked at the intellect, he found that as far as traveling the mystic path is concerned, it is blind." God must endow the intellect with sight. And Karaqāni adds: "...I have given a hand to many people and led them out of the delusion of intellect onto the path." God's mode of pursuing us is figuratively summed up in the brief maxim: "*Love is God's net.*" Love and intellect are often thematically elaborated as a pair of opposites.

Although Sufis strive to detach themselves from the created realm, the Shaikh is not an ascetic who literally withdraws from the every day world and his fellow men. The Shaikh cites the following words of Sari-ye Saqāṭi as an illustration of his own situation: "Retiring to the mountains (Mt. Lakkām) is not manliness. The real man is engaged with God in the middle of the bazaar among the people and his heart is not empty of Him for a single instant." Remaining amongst mankind and endeavoring to better man's lot is an essential part of traveling the path. Šebli says: "A Sufi is not a Sufi until he has taken all mankind as a family charge upon himself." And on one occasion when asked: "Oh Shaikh, what is the path?", the Shaikh replies: "Truthfulness (*ṣedq*) and

Translator's Introduction

kindness. Truthfulness with God and kindness with God's creatures." As for truthfulness (*ṣedq*) and sincerity (*eklāṣ*), two qualities of attitude which are essential if the devotee is to receive God's grace and be able to progress on the path, the Shaikh declares: "Truthfulness is a deposit entrusted by God to His servants and the Self has no share in it... truthfulness is the path to the True and God has denied a path unto Himself to those possessed of Self." "If a heart doesn't contain a mystery from God and doesn't share a secret with God and doesn't hear words from God, it is because, in that heart, there is no sincerity (*eklāṣ*)" And he adds that there is no deliverance (*kalāṣ*) without sincerity (*eklāṣ*).

It is constantly emphasized that the devotee on the path is incapable of making progress without the aid of a qualified spiritual guide. The importance of the *pir* is expressed metaphorically in the saying: "It is easier to drag along a mountain by a hair than to emerge from the Self by oneself." And the notion of "companionship" or "association" (*ṣoḥbat*) as the means to spiritual development and self-transformation is illustrated in the parable of the piece of old, dry bread thrown into the ocean. The wave rises up and says to the bread: "If you keep company with me, you'll turn into a moist delicacy¹⁰⁰."

Parables and analogies are a favorite Sufi device for teaching in line with the notion of *eṣārat* -- indication, allusion or hint -- as distinct from *ʿebārat* -- direct expression or designation. The notion of an object expressing an essential meaning which the sensitive mystic is able to understand is summed up in the term *zabān-e ḥāl*. On one occasion the Shaikh is riding along with his group of disciples and they come upon workers emptying out a privy. The filth and excrement (*najāsat*) is piled up in a ditch. The Sufis are about to turn and head in another direction but the Shaikh tells them to halt while he "translates" what the excrement is saying in the language of essence (*zabān-e ḥāl*). The excrement complains that it was originally much sought after, succulent delicacies but having spent one night in men's company, it has taken on their character and complexion. This brings tears to the eyes of the Shaikh's companions. At another time, when the Shaikh and his group come before a mill, the Shaikh remarks: "Do you know what this mill is saying?" The mill's message is: "Sufism consists in doing what I do. You receive the coarse and give back the refined, and circumambulate yourself. You journey within yourself, in order to eliminate from yourself what is not necessary -- not within the world, in order to make land pass under your feet."

Finally, I would like to look at a few passages from the text which illustrate the Sufi notion of poverty. In one anecdote darvishes are represented (anachronistically) as asking the Prophet Moḥammad: "What is it to be a darvish?"¹⁰¹ By way of giving a vivid answer, the Prophet puts a series of questions to each one of the group. Do you have five dirhems? Could you borrow or could you earn five dirhems? Anyone who answers in the affirmative is not a real darvish. Then the Prophet asks what is to be done if someone should find five dirhems. Only one person in the group gives the correct reply. "The sum should be at the disposal of the darvishes. I would have no share in it at all." The Prophet declares: "You are truly a darvish. This is what a darvish is like. He does not have a 'he'." The others ask: "Oh Prophet of God, everyone calls us darvishes but being a darvish is, in fact, what you have pointed out. What, then, are we?" The Prophet concludes: "He is a darvish. You are all parasites on him."

To be a darvish is to be poor and to trust in God for one's subsistence. This means in practice to live from donations of one's fellow Muslims. But the essential point being made above is that darvishes share what they acquire through begging or chance gifts. And the notion may appear in the figurative sense of sharing a spiritual insight with one's fellow darvishes. Yaḥyā, the deranged looking itinerant darvish, passes through Meyhana after having made the pilgrimage to Mecca on foot.¹⁰² The Shaikh urges him to share what he has acquired spiritually on his pilgrimage. The Shaikh says to him: "Oh Yaḥyā, one cannot consume, all by oneself¹⁰³, the gifts of such a Majestic Presence. You must place at the group's disposal what you've brought with you and give them the benefit of it." The insight he has to share with the darvishes, however, is not what one would have expected. It is a variant on the theme of depreciating the importance of the pilgrimage to Mecca. He replies: "Oh Shaikh, I set out and arrived. I saw and I received. But the Beloved is not there!" Hearing these words, the Shaikh is transported into ecstasy and shouts out loud.

Related to the general notion of leading a life of poverty is the practice of not putting aside any "means" or "wherewithal" (*ma'lum*) for tomorrow. Whatever comes into one's hands in the way of money, food or goods must be consumed immediately. When the Shaikh is suddenly given a gift of a large amount of incense and burns it all at once, he is following the same principle. In a state of joy he exclaims: "Whatever arrives on a puff of air, is carried off by wind and smoke." The Shaikh is portrayed as behav-

ing this way in several anecdotes. The wealthy merchant Bu 'Amr-e Hasku declares to Hasan-e Mo'addeb, the Shaikh's servant: "From head to foot I've become a devotee of the Shaikh. I entreat you come to me for everything the Shaikh needs."¹⁰⁴ And he gives Hasan the large sum of 1000 dinars to meet whatever expenses may arise in the future. But this form of security is in violation of the Shaikh's state of poverty. The next day the Shaikh reproaches Bu 'Amr with the words: "You would bring the hawk of my spiritual aspiration (*hemmat*) down from the summit of the seventh heaven to the lower depths of the earth and fasten it to 1000 dinars." The Shaikh takes the money and gives a great banquet, thus consuming the entire sum in one day. When criticized for such extravagance (*esrāf*) which is legally proscribed by Islamic law, the Shaikh replies: "Whatever you do for the sake of the True, will not be extravagance." The anecdote concludes by referring to the tradition about Belāl the Abyssinian, and the Prophet. Belāl has put aside a half piece of bread for the next day but the Prophet admonishes him: "*Consume everything... have no fear of scarcity with regard to the Possessor of the Celestial Throne.*" That is to say, God, in all His majesty, will look after the darvishes.

Members of the conservative religious establishment are regularly depicted as raising objections to the Shaikh's rather scandalous, grand life style. His banquets and visible comforts are perceived as a contradiction to the proper ascetic or Sufi commitment to poverty. On one occasion, an Islamic judge enters a room and sees the Shaikh "propped up on a throne of pillows like a sultan."¹⁰⁵ The *qāzi* is shocked and exclaims: "Where is there poverty here? This is the way of kings, not the way of Sufis and darvishes!" In self-justification, the Shaikh gives a variation of his usual reply to such criticism: "How can the word 'poverty' apply to anyone who is engaged in beholding the True?" And at that the Shaikh silences the *qāzi* with his terror-instilling glance (*nazar-e heybat*).

John O'Kane
Pégairolles de l'Escalette

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE:

Praise be to God, Who has illuminated the hearts of His Friends with the subtleties of His light and transformed the heart's core and the interior of His loved ones into a treasure of His secrets and lifted the curtains and veils of insolence from the minds of His elect. And blessings and peace be upon Moḥammad, the servant of God, the Prophet of God, the best of God's best creatures, and upon his family, companions, helpers and supporters, peace and salutations.

.....

Gratitude, praise, adoration without limit, glory without end, eulogy and worship beyond all bounds to God, the Creator of this created universe, the Maker of all that is made and exists, *His name is exalted and His attributes are sanctified* -- the Lord God, Who without motive, cause, or pursuit of benefit or gain, nay only through sheer generosity, grace and perfect kindness -- and in order to display His omnipotence -- has created the world.

And He has distinguished the world with a variety of marvels and wonders. One from among the many is that He created Adam the Elect, *God's blessings be upon him*, from a handful of earth and Adam is the father of the human family and the support of mankind.

For years God let lie between Mecca and Ṭāyef Adam's frame formed out of "*fetid mud*"¹ until from the world of divine will aptitude for the spirit and perfection to possess the human soul² were bestowed upon him. Then God adorned Adam's frame with the jewel-like saying:

*"I have breathed into him of My spirit."*³

And upon Adam God decreed the name of man.

Now, since man, intimacy and companionship⁴ are words composed of the same family of letters, God's all-sufficient wisdom ordained that Adam should feel the need for a companion, that he

might fend off the severity of solitude through this mate's companionship. Thus, by means of creation and by way of invention, God brought forth Eve, the Mother of Mankind, from the left rib of Adam and caused sexual passion, which is one of the accidents of the animal soul, to enter into the constitution of their nature, that by means of this accident the foundation of begetting and generation be made firm and permanent among men.

Within the confines of the world and across the expanse of earth so many thousands of humans have appeared and become manifest, have been designated and defined – each group distinguished by its own attributes and each community known for its own special qualities, each people possessing its own language and tongue different from the others. The root was one but the twigs and branches are varied without end. Thus is God's perfect power demonstrated with cogent proof and a clear display.

*"All things contain the evidence of God
And demonstrate that He is all-powerful."*

And God decreed that the finest and the best of Adam the Elect's offspring be prophets and emissaries, *God's blessings be upon them, one and all* – for this group constitutes the link between the Lord and His servants, between the Creator and His creatures. And He ordained that their souls be perfected to such an extent and elevated to such a degree that though in outer form they are among men, in attribute they abide with God – *glory be to His majesty!* Thus, having acquired the essence of truth and seeing with the special light of prophethood, prophets knew themselves obliged to guide and instruct the people accordingly and to take it upon themselves to command men to abstain from waywardness and sin, so that they might hasten from the deluge of ignorance and the desert of perplexity to the shore of salvation and the river of true guidance⁵. Thus, men ascend from the level of bestiality to the rank of articulate speech and the attributes of humanity.

After the class of prophets, in His perfect generosity and His absolute wisdom, God brought into being the Friends, who possess miraculous powers, hold intimate converse with God, and are masters of the mystic stations. In reality they are close to the emissaries and prophets. The difference between the Friends and the class of prophets is no more than this. Whereas the prophet is able to abide with God in attribute and at the same time be among men

Author's Introduction

in appearance, the Friend's absorption in God prevents him from being occupied with mankind. Furthermore, the prophet is charged with calling man to God and giving religious guidance, while the Friend is exempt from all that.⁶

Indeed, it would be impossible to send prophets and institute prophethood in every age and in every century but in every age the existence of possessors of miraculous powers and masters of the mystic stations is conceivable. And the Friends exist so that by means of their spiritual states, their sayings, what they do and what they refrain from doing, they may turn men at large from the world of appearance to the world of higher meaning. Thus, men will realize that beyond this world of forms is another world for which man has been created, that man is in this world to gather provisions for the journey to the other world and to prepare himself for his arrival there and, that even if man cannot attain to the rank of the spiritual angels, he may achieve elevation above the rank of beasts and animals.

.....

Having offered up adoration, gratitude and praise without end to God, *mighty is His grandeur*, let my tongue in all sincerity offer countless prayers, salutations, praise and benedictions on behalf of the sanctified soul, the immaculate grave, the pure spirit, and the perfumed tomb of that chief of prophets, that leader among the elect, Moḥammad-e Moṣṭafā⁷ – *God's blessings and peace be upon him!* For should such homage be cut short, the heavenly bodies would stop their motion and the mountains, tent pegs of the earth, would move.

After the Prince of the world, *peace be upon him*, has received praise, may thousands of salutations and benedictions descend upon the pure souls of his good Companions⁸ and upon the members of his family, all of whom were stars in the heavens of religious guidance and candles at the gathering of orthodoxy and divine favor – *as long as days succeed upon days, and months and years follow behind one another -- amen, oh Lord God of the creation!*

* * *

Thus speaks the author of this book, the humble sinner, Moḥammad, the son of Monavvar, son of Abu Sa'd, son of Abu Tāher, the son of the Great Shaikh, Sultan of the Mystic Path,

Manifestation of Truth, Abu Saʿid Faḡlollāh b. Abi'l-Keyr of Meyhana -- *God sanctify his awesome soul and shed light upon their final resting places!*

From early childhood and youth's first flowering the aspirations of this unworthy servant have been exclusively concerned with seeking out the auspicious and beneficial sayings⁹, the propitious deeds and mystic stations¹⁰ of his ancestor, *that Sultan of the Mystic Path, Manifestation of Truth, Abu Saʿid Faḡlollāh b. Abi'l-Keyr -- God sanctify his awesome soul!*

And this information I sought from spiritual masters, and the sons and the most notable grandsons of the Shaikh, *God shed light upon their resting places*, and I have taken the utmost care to verify the accompanying chains of transmission¹¹.

But that age was an age of good fortune and a time when the mystic path and the religious law flourished. The world was adorned with the presence of great imams who were suns in the heavens of religion and stars in the celestial sphere of firm belief. The earth was decorated with the dignity of venerable spiritual masters who were Tent Pegs of the mystic path, and Pivots¹² in the world of Truth. Disciples were true, supporters¹³ were full of sympathy. Aspirations aimed solely at studying religious law, desires focused on traveling the mystic path.

For the sake of blessings and good fortune, and that while traveling the way of Truth, they might have a guide and helper who would be their means of seeking the path to the Supreme Presence and their instrument for distinguishing between mere thoughts and divine inspirations, all men knew by heart the greater part of the mystic states and stations of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, as well as his beneficial sayings and deeds. Indeed, they passed their time conversing about these matters.

For this reason my spiritual masters, *may God shed light upon their resting places*, did not make a serious attempt to collect this information. All hearts were illuminated with these precepts, all ears were delighted by their repetition, all tongues were perfumed by their mention and their propagation. Thus, men did not require a collection which would familiarize them with the whole, as well as the particular details. Indeed, the fame of the Shaikh's mystic stations and sayings among common folk and elite, and the complete acceptance of his spiritual states and miraculous powers by the sects and schools of jurisprudence -- despite the latter's dis-

Author's Introduction

approval¹⁴ of "this affair"¹⁵ -- freed the people from the need of making a compilation.

.....

And so matters stood until recently when the calamity of the Gozz¹⁶ and the devastation of Khorasan took place and in Khorasan in general what came to pass came to pass, and in Meyhana in particular we saw what we saw and endured what we endured. For truly, throughout all the regions of Khorasan no single place suffered during this calamity such affliction and misfortune, such destruction and adversity, as befell Meyhana and the people of Meyhana. And the truth of the following Tradition was witnessed by myself and all the people of Khorasan in the afflictions of Meyhana:

"The harshest afflictions fall upon the prophets, then upon the Friends, and then upon men of excellence in descending order."

To be brief, in Meyhana itself one hundred and fifteen of the Shaikh's descendants, young and old alike -- whose lineage goes back to the Shaikh -- through various forms of torture inflicted with fire, earth¹⁷, or otherwise, met with destruction, or were martyred by the sword. That figure does not include those who were martyred in other cities or did not survive the famine and pestilence which followed upon the calamity. *God have mercy on them, one and all!*

What happened to the sincere disciples and the loving supporters¹⁸ of the Shaikh must be reckoned by analogy with this.

Great men of religion and guides on the mystic path went beneath the earth's veil and an age of dearth appeared -- a dearth of Muslim faith and the glory of religion. Religious affairs entered into full retrogression and the gravest disorder invaded the mystic path. The time of extinction of religious leaders and cessation of spiritual guides was at hand. And God, *He is exalted*, had carried out His threat:

*"Do they not see how We visit the land, reducing it of its outlying parts?"*¹⁹

And the truth of the text²⁰ was demonstrated and made clear:

"God, He is exalted, does not uproot learning with one great uprooting, but He reduces it by reducing the number of the learned."

Spiritual striving ceased, beliefs became totally corrupted and the greater part of Muslims became content with the mere name of Muslim faith and the mere form of the mystic path and Truth.

.....

In these circumstances the action of God's grace within my undeserving breast and the petitioning of devotees led me to compile a collection of the mystic stations, spiritual states and deeds of my ancestor, that Sultan of the Mystic Path, Manifestation of Truth, Shaikh Abu Sa'id b. Abi'l-Keyr – *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

Thus, greater encouragement might be given to those desiring to enter on the mystic path and a guide and example might be offered to those already engaged in traveling the way of Truth. For it is written:

*"And we are guided by their footprints."*²¹

And in another place where God mentions the group of the elect who have been accorded the privilege of divine grace, He declares:

*"Those are the ones God has rightly guided, so follow their guidance."*²²

Due to fortune's adversity and the occurrence of an endless succession of pillaging and plundering, Meyhana has been reduced to such a state that no vestiges of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, remain except his grave and his sepulchral shrine. Consequently, despite great efforts, only a little of what one sought was to be found and only a small sample could be gathered from far flung corners. Because of the lapse of time and the prolongation of the interval, and concern for children and survivors, as well as grief at the loss of those who perished, and the various trials and afflictions from the harsh tortures of the Gozz, and dreadful sufferings, and because of being outcasts from home and family -- what had once been in people's memory, was for the most part gone and forgotten and remained under the veil of:

"Earning my daily bread kept me from poetry."

.....

Furthermore, the Shaikh's life, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, spanned one thousand months which amounts to eighty-three years and four months. And this is known from what passed the Shaikh's blessed lips during his farewell assembly: "I have completed one thousand months and beyond one thousand²³ there is no reckoning."

How, then, can one record what happened during this length of time, or how is it possible to take it all into consideration. It is out of the question, indeed, one of life's impossibilities, to be able to relate all the sayings, states and various forms of behavior of a person during his lifetime.

Be that as it may, this well-wisher has undertaken whatever was in the realm of possibility and within the limits of his capacity, and has expended the utmost effort on this task. Likewise, in verifying the chains of transmission²⁴ in the compilation, he has striven in the extreme. If any fault appeared in an account, or if there was some doubt or suspicion concerning its chain of transmission, he has omitted it and refrained from mentioning it.

.....

Earlier, in the age of upright order, the lofty and learned Imam Jamāl al-Din Abu Rowḥ Loṭfollāh b. Abi Sa'īd b. Abi Sa'īd²⁵, who was the cousin of this well-wisher, had made a compilation complying with the request of a disciple, and this he divided into five chapters. In each chapter he has presented a report along with its chain of transmitters and presented an explanation of the meaning of the report, as accorded with his perfect learning and the wealth of his pure style and eloquence. And he entitled the work *The Mystic States and Sayings of Our Shaikh*²⁶ -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* But Jamāl al-Din traveled the road of brevity and condensation.

It was not the intention of this well-wisher to exhibit this lowly, black bead of his alongside those precious jewels, or place this paltry merchandise side by side with that wealth of learning and eloquence, for I do not imagine I have the capacity to grasp the saddle straps of Jamāl al-Din's pre-eminence, nor such style in any of the arts as could attain to the dust left behind by his steed.

Nonetheless, it is said (verse):

"Beads of small worth are often strung with pearls."

My wish was only that this feeble servant might add to whatever so great a one had presented of the mystic states and stations of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and that this well-wisher might write down whatever of the blessed deeds and sayings of the Shaikh, *God illuminate his final resting place*, had reached him and proved to be authentic. Thus, more of his deeds, mystic states and stations, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, would remain among people of this age and men at large, and some of what had disappeared and been eradicated through the recent upheavals and disorders would be revived and stand in later time as a memorial on my behalf.

Indeed, it is known and confirmed that as time marches forward, men's aspirations are increasingly beset with faults. The traveler on the mystic path becomes more scarce, religious science is no longer available to everyone, and pious actions are as rare as the philosopher's stone²⁷. Yet, in no less wise do the words of that outstanding man of religion, unique in his age, give delight to the ears of the true believers and provide pleasure for the hearts and souls of those who aspire to follow the mystic path. Furthermore, it is as they have said:

"Though I can't afford to buy the sugar heap,
In any case I'll shoo away the flies."

And the great have declared:

"Divine mercy descends when you recall men of piety."

.....

Since the states of all men and their affairs fall within three stages, a beginning, middle and end, this compilation has been divided into three books.

BOOK ONE contains the beginning of our Shaikh's mystic state, from the days of his childhood to his fortieth year. It includes whatever I was able to ascertain concerning his studies, ascetic practices and struggle for spiritual purification during that period. Likewise, his *pīrs* and *shaikhs* are mentioned and the lineage of his spiritual science and his mystic robe is traced back to Moṣṭafā²⁸ -- *peace be upon him!*

Author's Introduction

BOOK TWO treats the middle period of our Shaikh's mystic state, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and this book falls into three parts.

The first contains reports concerning the miraculous gifts the Shaikh displayed, and we have verified that these reports are from trustworthy narrators.

The second part consists of reports that contain the Shaikh's own points of instruction, as well as some reports about other shaikhs and their sayings which he cited for the sake of moral benefit.

The third part contains points of instruction and pithy sayings gathered from his discourses, along with some of his prayers, various lines of verse which passed his venerable lips, and a few of his letters that have come into my hands.

BOOK THREE describes the end of our Shaikh's mystic state, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and this book is in three parts.

The first contains the Shaikh's last recommendations at the time of his death.

The second recounts the circumstances of his death.

The third describes miracles that took place after the Shaikh had passed away. Some of these he had predicted while still alive, others were simply witnessed after his death.

And this compilation has been accorded the title:

THE SECRETS OF GOD'S MYSTICAL ONENESS OR THE SPIRITUAL STATIONS OF SHAIKH ABU SA'ID.²⁹

I have beseeched God, *He is exalted*, to give me divine aid to complete this collection, and to show me the righteous path and the road of true guidance. And for the sake of brevity and condensation and in order to avoid causing impatience and weariness, I have omitted the chains of transmission³⁰.

May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, through His perfect generosity, through His bounty and indulgence, make divine aid our companion, so that the goal and object of our striving may be attained by traveling the pathways of true reality. And should the end not be attained, may our footsteps not regress beyond their starting point. And God grant us increase in whatever pertains to matters of religion and faith and provide us with the security of His protection from retrogression and deficiency.

We take refuge with God lest dearth overtake us in the wake of prosperity. Verily, He is the best of assistants and helpers!

Praise be to God, Lord of the creation, and blessings be upon the Prophet Moḥammad, and upon his pure and excellent family, one and all!

* * *

It was the intention of this well-wishing author to be of service and present some rare gift to the King of Islam, honored Sultan, and awesome King of Kings, Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Sām³¹.

He is Master over the necks of all nations, Lord of the Arab and non-Arab kings, Support of the faithful, God's shadow in the cities, Helper of the Friends of God, Exterminator of God's enemies.

Assistant of the Caliph of God, Mainstay of the world and of religion, he brings honor to Islam and to the Muslims.

Right Arm of victorious dominion, Crown of the radiant people, Splendor of the shining community, Order of the world, Pleasing in Appearance to the Commander of the Faithful³²-- may God exalt his word and make his rule eternal!

.....

Just as this well-wisher never ceases to invoke dominion on behalf of the just and learned king, nor leaves off rendering thanks in return for his bounty, may the lofty expanse of his majestic court -- where kings prostrate themselves and sultans of the world kiss the ground -- not be without the rare gift and present of this sincere invoker of blessings.

Indeed, whenever a subtlety from these jewels or a delicacy from these spiritual precepts is presented to his most honorable ears, *God cause them to hear glad tidings and good cheer*, or whenever this work is subjected to auspicious royal perusal and the sultan's felicitous gaze, may recollection of this well-wisher at the lofty court and most honorable assembly -- they are the Ka'ba³³ of hopes and the *qebḷa*³⁴ of good fortune -- be renewed in the sublime judgement; this will count for me as a robe of honor and praise.

No matter how much I delved the recesses of my heart, whatever I imagined bore the hallmark of such a gift, though it were all the habitable surface of the earth, when compared with the royal court's auspicious expanse, it appeared wanting and like carrying

caraway seeds to Kermān³⁵, nay, in truth, like bringing a locust's leg before Solomon³⁶.

Drawing his conclusion from such a premiss, this sincere invoker of blessings saw it as preferable and closest to polite behavior to undertake a service and present a choice gift which would have no equal throughout the world. For it is firmly established in the king's sublime judgement that whatever rare gifts are of a worldly nature, are, like the world itself, doomed to perish, and to turn one's attention to them will not secure eternal happiness.

Had there been in all the world some rare gift within reach of this well-wisher, which was greater and more precious than the present gift, he would have sent that as a service to this royal court, the greatest of all royal courts that exist. And since all the awesome sultan's aspirations, *God make manifest his proof and glorify his dignity*, have been limited to obtaining religious precepts³⁷, it is the belief of this sincere invoker of blessings that his appropriate, precious gift will meet with approval.

For, indeed, the only provisions that can be gathered for the journey to the everlasting abode, consist of adhering to the *Sonnat*³⁸ of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings be upon him*, and conformity to the example of the lives of the Friends. And achieving that conformity comes after complete knowledge of the nature of their conduct and awareness of the subtle points of their manners and customary practices, the evident as well as the hidden.

Now, the spiritual director, father, guide and example of this humble invoker of blessings is Shaikh Abu Sa'id-e Abu'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and this well-wishing servant has spent all his time and consumed his whole life in seeking out the Shaikh's beneficial sayings, discourses and mystic stations and his manner of traveling the road of religious law and the mystic path. And in accordance with his scope and capabilities, he has made a collection of those spiritual precepts for travelers on the mystic path and devotees of the Court Everlasting. Moreover, no disciple before this servant, by way of explaining the mode of conduct and collecting precepts from the discourses and mystic stations of his shaikh, had put together a more comprehensive or more instructive compilation than this one.

Consequently, this servant wished to send this greatest and most perfect gift to the king's royal court which is the best and most eminent court of the kings of the world. Indeed, in view of God's generosity, *He is sublime and exalted*, there is a firm hope,

nay rather a genuine certainty, that this equitable sovereign, being the greatest king of the epoch and the best ruler of the age, with respect to his justice, faith, religious practice and his conduct, will be the most eminent king in rank and proximity at the court of divine majesty and the most favored sultan in the afterlife throughout the expanse of the realm of Paradise.

And this accords with the Tradition from the bearer of divine law³⁹, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, who has declared:

"One hour of justice from a just king is worth more than several years of a pious ascetic's devotions."

And Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has also said:

"The world is a sowing field for the future life."

Since this king has sown no seeds in the world other than justice, fairness for his subjects, bounty on behalf of the weak and inferior, generosity and humaneness towards good men and men of religion, assuredly tomorrow's increase from these seeds can be none other than fruits such as:

*"In a seat of truthfulness in the presence of an Almighty Sovereign."*⁴⁰

Thus, the hope of this humble well-wisher, based on the just and noble king's prevailing generosity and dignified character, is that the king will deign to look upon this gift with the eye of approval and honor it with the honor of acceptance at the sublime court -- *God raise on high the court's prestige!* And may he regard this unworthy servant, under all circumstances, as the special wisher of blessings on behalf of the king's reign and know him to be grateful for benefactions and one who remembers the generosity of the royal court -- that place of refuge and asylum for all mankind.

And if, due to the negligence inherent in human nature, this well-wishing servant has committed any slip or blunder and the just and learned king, *God make his rule eternal*, has detected it by applying his penetrating insight, that adornment of the universe, may he draw the pen of forgiveness and indulgence across

Author's Introduction

the error with perfect royal nobility and cover it up again and again out of his infinite kingly generosity.

May the Creator, *He is exalted and sanctified*, sustain the brilliance of the sun-like rule of that shadow of God until the resurrection and preserve and protect him from the eclipse of decline and keep the shadow of justice and equity of that sun of the sultans of all time, luminary of the kings of the age, forever shining and fixed above the heads of his weak subjects and all inferiors.

And God see to it that his kingship in the transitory abode of this world be joined to sovereignty and rule in the everlasting abode and, out of divine generosity, put within his reach and attainment whatever bears in it the religious and worldly good of this just and learned sultan.

.....

Praise be to God, Lord of the creation, and blessings be upon the Prophet Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all! God alone is our sufficiency. He is the best Master and the best of helpers.

BOOK ONE

ON THE BEGINNING OF OUR SHAIKH ABU SA'ID'S MYSTIC CAREER – GOD SANCTIFY HIS AWESOME SOUL!

* * *

Know that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, never spoke of himself as "I" or "we" but whenever he referred to himself, he said: "They¹ said or they did such-and-such a thing."

If in the present collection this well-wisher cited the Shaikh's words in the form that they passed his blessed lips and for the sake of blessings retained the very manner of his speech, the construction and sense of his words would fall wide of ordinary men. Some readers, nay even the greater part of them, would be easily led into error.

They would not be able constantly to bear in mind that by "they" the Shaikh meant himself and it would be awkward, especially for someone who picked up this book and wished to read a story but had not begun at the beginning of the book and noted this point.

With this for his excuse, the well-wishing author has written "we"² whenever the Shaikh said "they", as that form of speech is in accordance with current usage and closest to the understanding of readers. However, let it be known that whenever we represent the Shaikh as saying "we", in his own blessed speech it had been "they".

"A hint to the wise is sufficient."

* * *

Know that the father of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was Abu'l-Keyr and in Meyhana he was known as Bābu³ Bu'l-Keyr. He was a druggist and a man of religion and scrupulous piety. He had knowledge of the religious law and the mystic path and constantly associated with the Companions of the Porch⁴ and the followers of the mystic path.

.....

On a Sunday, the first day of the month of Moḥarram, in the year 357⁵, our Shaikh's birth took place -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

.....

Our Shaikh's father kept company with a group of esteemed⁶ members of the mystic community⁷ who every night of the week gathered at the house of one of their number. And if a stranger of spiritual esteem arrived, they brought him along as well. When they had had something to eat and finished with the prayers and recitations, they would then perform the *samāʿ*⁸.

One night when Bābu Bu'l-Keyr was intending to go to a gathering of darvishes, the Shaikh's mother requested of him: "Take Bu Sa'īd with you so that the gaze⁹ of the darvishes and men of spiritual esteem may fall upon him."

Bābu Bu'l-Keyr brought the Shaikh with him. When they began the *samāʿ*, the reciter chanted this quatrain:

"Love's grief is a gift the darvishes receive!
Their Friendship¹⁰ is their killing of the Self.
Dirhems and dinars provide no man with rank.
Chivalrous heroes die in self-sacrifice."

When the reciter chanted this quatrain, a state of ecstasy came over the darvishes. That night they danced to these verses until dawn and remained in a state of ecstasy.

As the reciter repeated the quatrain so often, the Shaikh learned it by heart. When they returned home, the Shaikh asked his father: "These verses -- which the reciter was chanting and which caused the darvishes to experience so much joy -- what do they mean?"

The Shaikh's father replied: "Hush! You cannot grasp or understand what this means. What does this have to do with you?"

Later when the Shaikh had attained his high spiritual degree and our Shaikh's father, Bābu Bu'l-Keyr, had passed over to the mercy of God, the Shaikh often cited these verses in his talks and he would say: "Oh, that Bābu Bu'l-Keyr were here today that I might tell him: 'You didn't understand what you heard on that occasion yourself!'"

* * *

They tell how our Shaikh's father, Bābu Bu'l-Keyr, was a great admirer of Sultan Maḥmud¹¹. When he had himself a house built in Meyhana, the house now known as the House of the Shaikh, he ordered the walls and ceilings of the building to be decorated with the sultan's name and the names of the sultan's servants, members of his retinue, elephants and horses.

The Shaikh was a child but he said to his father: "Build a room for me in this house, a room just for me which no one else will have the right to use."

On top of the house the Shaikh's father had a room built for him which is called the Shaikh's Retreat.

When the room was finished and they had done the plastering, the Shaikh ordered them to write on the room's door, walls, and ceiling: "Allah, Allah, Allah."

His father said: "Child, what is this?"

The Shaikh replied: "Everyone writes the name of his commander on the walls of his house."

A state of joy came over the Shaikh's father. He regretted what he had done and ordered everything they had written to be removed from his house.

From that moment on he looked at the Shaikh differently and took special interest in the Shaikh's affairs.

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, learned the Qor'ān from Kvāja Imam Bu Moḥammad-e 'Annāzi, who was an imam of scrupulous piety and one of the most famous Qor'ānic reciters¹² in Khorasan. His tomb is in Nasā -- *God have mercy upon him!*

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related: "Once in my childhood when I was learning the Qor'ān, my father, Bābu Abu'l-Keyr, was taking me to the Friday prayers. On the way to the mosque, Pir Bu'l-Qāsem Beṣr-e Yāsin¹³, also on his way to the prayers, met us.

.....

Bu'l-Qāsem was one of the famous religious scholars of the day and one of the great shaikhs of that age. And he resided in Meyhana.

.....

The Shaikh has said:

"As soon as Bu'l-Qāsem caught sight of us, he asked: 'Oh Abu'l-Keyr, whose child is this?'

My father replied: 'My own.'

The *pir* came closer to me and crouching down, pressed his cheek against mine and his eyes filled with tears.

Then he said: 'Oh Abu'l-Keyr, I was unable to depart from this world. I saw that the spiritual domain¹⁴ was empty and that the darvishes would go untended. Now I have set eyes upon your son and I can rest assured, for the spiritual domains shall have their share in this child.'

Then he said to my father: 'When you come forth from the prayers, bring the child before me.'

When we were finished with the prayers, my father brought me to Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin. We entered his cell of retirement and sat down before him. In his cell there was a niche. Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin told my father: 'Lift Bu Sa'id onto your shoulders so that he can take down a loaf of bread from the niche.'

My father lifted me up and stretching forth my hand, I took the loaf of bread from the niche. It was a barley loaf and warm -- enough so that my hand could feel the warmth.

Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin took the loaf from my hand and tears welled up in his eyes. He broke the bread into two halves and giving me one half, said: 'Eat!'

The other half he ate himself, giving no part of it to my father.

My father remarked: 'Oh Shaikh, why have you given me no share of this bounty?'

Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr replied: 'Oh Abu'l-Keyr, thirty years ago I placed this loaf in the niche and it has been promised me that whoever warms this loaf in his hands, shall bring life to a whole world and shall be the seal upon "this affair"¹⁵. Now let this be wholly joyous tidings for you, since that person shall be your son.'

Then Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr said to me: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, learn these words and be ever repeating them:

Book One

"Praise and glory unto You, for You are mild-tempered though all-knowing. Praise and glory unto You, for You are forgiving though almighty."

I learned these words by heart and was ever repeating them."

The Shaikh has said:

"When I left his presence that day, I didn't understand the meaning of what this *pir* had said."

.....

Pir Bu'l-Qāsem continued to live for some time thereafter and our Shaikh, while growing up, learned many instructive points from him.

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"When I had learned the whole of the Qor'ān, my father said: 'Tomorrow you must go before a tutor in letters.'

I reported to my teacher what my father had said. He replied: 'May it prove a blessing!'

And he said a prayer for me and added: 'Learn these words in memory of me:

"If you attend to God only during the blinking of an eye, you gain more wealth than all that the sun shines over."

That is to say, if your thought is with God even one moment, you are better off than if you possessed the whole earth's surface.

I learned this instructive point by heart. Then my teacher said: 'Pardon any wrong I may have done.'

I said: 'You have my pardon.'

He said: 'May God, *He is exalted*, bestow blessings upon you and upon your learning!'

The next day my father brought me to Bu Sa'id-e 'Annāzi.

.....

And he was an imam, an expounder of religious law¹⁶, and a tutor in letters.

.....

I remained 'Annāzi's student for a certain period, during which time I often attended upon Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin who taught me the proper religious practices of Islam."

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One day Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin said to me: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, strive to eliminate acquisitiveness from your behavior¹⁷, for sincerity will not abide with acquisitiveness. Action undertaken out of acquisitiveness is wage earning. Action out of sincerity is the devotion of servitude.'

Then he said: 'Learn this Tradition from the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*: "God proclaimed to me on the night of my *me'rāj*¹⁸:

'Oh Moḥammad, for those who strive to draw near unto Me, there is nothing more effective than performing the religious duties that I have laid upon them. Furthermore, the devotee who undertakes extra religious practices, never ceases drawing closer unto Me until I come to love him.

And when I have come to love him, I am his hearing, his sight, his hand and his Strengtheners. Through Me he hears, through Me he sees, and through Me he grasps with his hand.'"

To that Bu'l-Qāsem added: 'Performing one's religious duties is the devotion of servitude but undertaking extra religious practices exhibits love.'

Thereupon he recited these verses:

'The perfect friend is the unacquisitive friend.
What value has an object of fixed price?
The giver counts far more than any gift.
What worth have gifts beside the philosopher's stone¹⁹?"

* * *

And our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One day while I was in Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin's presence, he said to me: 'Oh child, would you like to talk to God?'

I replied: 'Yes, I would. Of course I would!'

Book One

He said: 'Whenever you are alone, say this and say no more than this:

Apart from you, my love, I have no peace.
I cannot count the favors you've given me.
Though each hair on my body became a tongue,
Thanks uttered wouldn't match one gift in a thousand.'

I was always reciting these verses so that, through their blessing, the road to Truth opened up before me in my childhood."

.....

Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin died in Meyhana in the year 380²⁰. Whenever the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went to the cemetery of Meyhana, he would first visit the tomb of Bu'l-Qāsem.

* * *

One day while conversing, our Shaikh said:
"There was an aged old blind man who used to come to this mosque."

.....

The Shaikh pointed to his own mosque which stands by the entrance to his sepulchral shrine in Meyhana.

.....

"The old man would sit there, having placed his walking stick behind his back.

One day I came in to see him and I was carrying my school bag, for I had just left my tutor in letters.

I greeted the old man with 'salaam' and he returned my greeting. Then he said: 'Are you the child of Bābu Bu'l-Keyr?'

I replied: 'Indeed, I am.'

He asked: 'What are you reading?'

I told him which books.

The old man said: 'The shaikhs have declared:

"True knowledge is what is unveiled in hearts."

At that time, I didn't understand the meaning of '*the truth*' or '*unveiling*'. Only sixty years later did God, *He is sublime and exalted*, make evident and clear to me the truth of this saying."

* * *

Upon completing his studies in letters, our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, turned his attention to religious law and set out for the city of Marv²¹.

Once while he was speaking, our Shaikh said: "The day I left Meyhana and went to Marv to study religious law, I knew by heart thirty thousand lines of pre-Islamic verse²²."

* * *

And so our Shaikh went to Marv before Imam Abu 'Abdollāh al-Kezri, who was the greatest imam and jurisconsult²³ in that day and age. He was also knowledgeable in the science of the mystic path and was one of the authoritative imams. Our companions²⁴ often use his methods of inference in legal matters.

He was the disciple of Ebn-e Soreyj who was the disciple of Mozani, and Mozani was the disciple of Šāfe'i-ye Moṭṭalebi²⁵ -- *may God be pleased with them all!*

.....

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, adhered to the doctrines of jurisprudence established by Šāfe'i -- *God be pleased with him!*

.....

And all the shaikhs and followers of the mystic path who lived after Šāfe'i, *God be pleased with him*, were like this. They all adhered to his doctrines. If someone followed another school of law before setting out on the mystic path, he came to adhere to the school of Šāfe'i, once God, *He is sublime and exalted*, in His perfect generosity and eternal favor devoid of motive, bestowed upon him the felicity of His love and that special distinction which the mystics enjoy at the divine royal court.

Such was the case of Shaikh Hoşri²⁶ who lived in Baghdad, and other shaikhs as well. But to make mention of them and enter

into the nature of this matter, would take time and treating that subject is not our present purpose.

The shaikhs who lived before Šāfe'i followed the school of law of the first generations of Islam or the school adhered to by their *pir*.

.....

There are some who maintain that the great Shaikh Bāyazid-e Bastāmi²⁷, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, adhered to the doctrines of the eminent Imam Abu Ḥanifa²⁸ of Kufa -- *God be pleased with him!* But that is not so, for the reason that Bāyazid, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was the disciple of Ja'far-e Šādeq²⁹, *God be pleased with him*, and was his cup bearer. Ja'far called him Bāyazid the Cup Bearer. Bāyazid followed the same school of law as Ja'far because Ja'far was his *pir*, as well as the Imam of the family of Moṣṭafā -- *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!*

Indeed, when pursuing the mystic path, it is in no way permissible for the disciple to follow a school of law other than that of his *pir*, or to adhere to any belief, or behave in any way, that is in opposition to his *pir*.

.....

But let no one assume from what I have written, namely that the shaikhs adhered to the doctrines of Šāfe'i, that for this reason any defect attaches to the school of the eminent Imam Abu Ḥanifa of Kufa -- *God be pleased with them both!* Let no one imagine such a thing. God forbid! *We take refuge in God*, lest such a thought occur to anyone, or enter any person's faith.

Indeed, the greatness, learning and piety of Abu Ḥanifa exceed the capacity of description of this well-wisher's tongue and pen. Abu Ḥanifa is the lamp of the Muslim community and the exemplar and leader of those who follow the tradition of the Prophet.

Both schools of law are in truth equal and both Imams, in what they have declared, follow the glorious Word of God, *He is sublime and exalted*, and are in conformity with the Traditions from Moṣṭafā -- *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!*

Anyone who looks at this truthfully, will see that both schools of religious law are in fact one. And when he considers the matter without partisanship, he will realize that there is no disagreement between the two illustrious Imams -- *God be pleased with them*

both -- with regard to the principles of their schools. If he finds some difference in practical application, let him bear in mind:

"Difference of opinion within my community is a divine mercy."

And if either of the two Imams has admitted some leniency in religious practice, it should be considered in the light of:

"He has not laid upon you any constriction in religion."³⁰

And it should be regarded from the view point of:

"I have been sent with the true religion which is generous and agreeable."

Difference of opinion should not be viewed with party zeal³¹ which is what afflicts most men. It must be recognized as certain that whatever the two Imams ordain cannot be anything but the truth. Likewise, both eminent Imams have been preserved and are exempt from the kind of partisanship which resides in our natures.

.....

This absence of party zeal is illustrated by the Tradition of sound transmission that goes back to Abu'l-Darāvardi³² who has said:

"I saw Mālek b. Anas³³ and Abu Ḥanifa, God be pleased with them both, discussing and studying together in the Mosque of the Prophet of God after the last evening prayers. If one of them rose up and acted in accordance with his own belief, the other one let him do so without reproaching him or accusing him of error. They continued their discussions in this way until they prayed together the following morning."

.....

Nonetheless, one must understand that the road of the mystic community is one of scrupulosity. At the beginning of their spiritual struggle, shaikhs impose upon themselves, by way of self-mortification, practices, some of which are from Tradition, while others are works of supererogation.

Book One

For example, Bu 'Amr-e Boškervāni has said: "I have conformed to the saying of Moṣṭafā³⁴, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*:"

'The right hand belongs to the upper part of the body and the left hand to the lower.'

Consequently, for thirty years my right hand has not descended below my navel, other than in conformity with Tradition³⁵."

.....

And Bešr the Barefoot³⁶, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, never wore shoes or sandals. He said: "God, *He is sublime and exalted*, has decreed:

*'God Who, for your sake, spread out the earth as a carpet.'*³⁷

The earth is God's carpet and I do not hold it as permissible to walk with shoes or sandals on the carpet³⁸ of God – *He is sublime and exalted!*"

All his life he went without shoes and thus was given the surname "the Barefoot".

.....

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "Whatever I read in books or heard or took down in writing, that Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, either did or ordered, I have done myself. And whatever I have heard or seen in books that the angels do, I also did in the beginning of my spiritual struggle."

.....

And that will be described in its proper place.

.....

Indeed, the lives of all the shaikhs were like this. During their whole life they followed the example of Moṣṭafā and any prayers which the Prophet performed in addition to the required prayers, they saw it as their duty to perform as well. Generally speaking, whatever is connected with scrupulous religious observance and

contempt for man's animal soul³⁹, they have taken upon themselves.

Consequently, because there is a certain strictness in Šāfe'i's doctrines and he demands greater rigor in the practices of religion, the choice of the mystic community goes to the school of Šāfe'i. But this is in order to humble and chastise the carnal soul, not because there is any real difference between the two schools, or because one of the two Imams is superior to the other.

For my part, I regard both Imams the same way I regard the Rightly Guided Caliphs⁴⁰ – *God be pleased with them!* I hold each of those caliphs to be rightful and true and I love all four of them from the bottom of my heart. I profess my belief in the virtues that were and are theirs, and I testify in truthfulness to the legitimacy of each one's caliphate at the time that it occurred. I do not contest them.

Furthermore, I invoke blessings upon those who do not give way to perverseness, party zeal, and the lust of their carnal soul, and do not indulge in reviling Moṣṭafā's Companions, *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet*, or the imams of past times, *God be pleased with them*, and the great men and shaikhs of religion – *God have mercy on those who have passed away, and to those who remain, give increase and perpetuate their days* – and do not hold slander to be permissible but recognize and declare the legitimacy of them all.

To sum up, considering all brothers in religion as better than oneself is the truly virtuous path, and refraining from reproach in all circumstances is the laudable road to travel. Attending to one's own improvement rather than occupying oneself with the faults of others is closer to propriety. May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, bestow on us and all men the road which leads to His contentment – *through His grace and His generosity!*

And now I return to the purpose of my discourse.

.....

Then, for five years our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, studied Agreement and Controversy⁴¹ in jurisprudence with Imam Abu 'Abdollāh-e Kezri. When the Shaikh had completed a course of dictation, the imam passed over to the mercy of God – *He is exalted!* Imam Abu 'Abdollāh's tomb is located in Marv.

When this imam passed away, the Shaikh went before Imam Abu Bakr-e Qaffāl-e Marvazi⁴², *God have mercy on him*, and studied jurisprudence for another five years. While studying with Imam Qaffāl, the Shaikh's fellow students were Shaikh Nāṣer-e Marvazi, Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, and Shaikh Bu 'Ali-ye Senji, each one of whom was the spiritual leader of an entire world.

During this period our Shaikh completed two courses of dictation with Imam Qaffāl and then set out for Saraks.

When he arrived in Saraks, the Shaikh went before Imam Abu 'Ali Zāher b. Aḥmad al-Faqih⁴³, who was a scholar of Qor'ānic commentary and the Traditions from the Prophet, as well as a jurist. It was he who introduced Šāfe'i's doctrines into Saraks.

.....

Here are some of the imams by the grace of whose teaching the people of these regions were delivered from the heresy of the Mo'tazelites⁴⁴ and came back to the doctrines of Šāfe'i: Homeyd-e Zanjuya in Šahrestāna, Farāva, and Nasā; Bu 'Amr-e Forāti in Āsatow and Kowjān; Bu Labāba of Meyhana in Bāvard and Kābarān; and Bu 'Ali al-Faqih in Saraks. *God have mercy on them, one and all!*

.....

Thus, our Shaikh studied with Bu 'Ali al-Faqih: mornings, Qor'ānic commentary and afternoons, principles of jurisprudence, and in the evening, he would study the Traditions from the Prophet -- *God's blessings and peace be upon him!*

In all three of these sciences the Shaikh was the student of Bu 'Ali al-Faqih. The tomb of this imam is located in Saraks.

* * *

When the Shaikh had been studying with Bu 'Ali in this manner for some time, one day he met Loqmān.

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"At the time that I was a student in Saraks studying with Bu 'Ali al-Faqih, one day on my way into the šārestān⁴⁵ I saw Loqmān-e Saraksi sitting on a heap of ashes, sewing a scrap of cloth onto his fur cloak⁴⁶."

.....

Loqmān was one of the wise madmen⁴⁷. Earlier in life he had undergone many austerities and been scrupulous in carrying out his religious duties. Suddenly he experienced an unveiling and his reason departed from him.

.....

With reference to this our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said:

"Earlier in life Loqmān had been a man of scrupulous piety, who strove to conform to religious law. Then some sort of madness came over him and he fell from his former rank.

People remarked: 'Oh Loqmān, look at what you were and what you are now!'

Loqmān replied: 'The more I served God, the more was required of me. I was at a loss. I said: "Oh Lord God, kings set free a bondsman when the bondsman grows old. You are a glorious king and I have grown old in Your service. Set me free!"

I heard a voice announce: "Oh Loqmān, I have set you free."

And the sign of his freedom was that his reason was taken from him."

.....

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, often remarked: "Loqmān has been set free by God from the commands and prohibitions of religion."

.....

Our Shaikh went on to relate:

"I walked up to Loqmān who was sewing a scrap of cloth onto his fur cloak, and watched him."

.....

And the Shaikh was standing in such a way that his shadow fell across Loqmān's cloak.

.....

"When Loqmān finished sewing the scrap of cloth onto his cloak, he said: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, I have sewn you onto this cloak along with the patch.'

Then he stood up and taking hold of my hand, he brought me to the *kānaqāh* of the *šārestān*. And Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan⁴⁸ was in that *kānaqāh*.

Loqmān called out and Pir Bu'l-Faẓl came to the door. Loqmān was still holding my hand. Now he placed my hand in the hand of Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan and said: 'Oh Bu'l-Faẓl, take care of this fellow for he is one of your own.'

.....

Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan was a man of great distinction.

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, at a later time when his spiritual state had reached perfection and Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan was no longer alive, was once asked: "Oh Shaikh, where does this good fortune of yours come from?"

The Shaikh replied: "From one glance of Pir Abu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan. When I was a student in Saraks studying with Bu 'Ali al-Faqih, one day I was walking on the bank of a stream and Pir Bu'l-Faẓl, coming along on the other side, looked at me from the corner of his eye⁴⁹. From that day up until now whatever I have become, I received from that glance."

.....

The Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, goes on to relate:

"Pir Bu'l-Faẓl took me by the hand and we sat down in the *soffa*⁵⁰ of the *kānaqāh*. When we were seated, Pir Bu'l-Faẓl picked up a fascicle⁵¹ and began to look at it. As is the habit of scholars, I wondered what subject the book dealt with. The *pir* knew my thought and said: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets have come and their purpose was one word. They announced to mankind:

"Say: 'Allah!' And give your attention to this."

Persons who had been given hearing went on repeating this word, until they became the word completely. Once this had absorbed them completely, they were drowned in the word. Then they became pure. The word appeared in their heart and they no longer had need of saying it."

.....

Our Shaikh has related:

"This word seized me and that night did not let me sleep. The following day before sunrise, having performed my prayers and

recitations, I took leave of the *pir* and went before Bu 'Ali al-Faqih, for my lesson on Qor'ānic commentary. When I sat down, the first lesson for the day was the Qor'ānic verse:

'Say Allah, and leave them to amuse themselves with idle talk.'"⁵²

Our Shaikh has said:

"The moment I heard this verse, a door opened in my breast and I was taken out of myself. Imam Bu 'Ali perceived the change that came over me.

He asked: 'Where were you last night?'

I replied: 'With Pir Bu'l-Fazl-e Ḥasan.'

He said: 'Rise and return to him. For it is forbidden to deal with this word, now that you have experienced that spiritual meaning.'

I went before the *pir* in a state of rapture and bewilderment, having become this word entirely.

When Bu'l-Fazl beheld me, he exclaimed: 'Oh Bu Sa'id (verse):

"You're drunk. You can't tell which is back or front!"

I said: 'Oh Shaikh, what are your orders?'

He replied: 'Come in and withdraw and devote yourself to this word, for this word has many effects to work on you.'

.....

The Shaikh has related:

"I remained with Pir Bu'l-Fazl for some time repeating this word with due regard for its higher truth.

One day he said to me: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, the doors of this word's letters have opened before you. Now armies are about to launch an attack within your breast and you will behold valleys of every sort.'

Then he said: 'You have been seized! You have been seized! You have been seized! Rise and seek isolation. Withdraw from men at large, as you have withdrawn from yourself. In your actions let there be careful observation and submission to God.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

Book One

"I abandoned all the sciences I had been studying and returned to Meyhana. I withdrew to a corner of the room, to the prayer niche in that cell of retirement."

.....
Here the Shaikh was referring to his own apartment.
.....

"For seven years I withdrew and went on repeating: 'Allah, Allah, Allah!'

Whenever, due to the weakness inherent in human nature, sleep or some form of negligence came over me, a black man, brandishing a fiery spear, would emerge from the prayer niche. Inspiring absolute awe and terror, he would shout at me and say: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, say Allah!'

Night and day, out of dread and fear of him, I shook and burned. I never fell asleep or was neglectful. And this continued until every one of my atoms came to cry out: 'Allah, Allah, Allah!'

Then once again I returned to Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan."

* * *

Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan was the spiritual master who initiated⁵³ our Shaikh.

Pir Bu'l-Faḡl was the disciple of Shaikh Bu Naṣr-e Sarrāj⁵⁴. Shaikh Bu Naṣr was called the Peacock of the Poor and has written works on the mystic path and higher truth. He resided in Ṭus where his tomb is located.

Shaikh Bu Naṣr was the disciple of Abu Moḥammad 'Abdollah b. Moḥammad al-Morta'eṣ, who was a man of great distinction. He died in Baghdad.

Al-Morta'eṣ was the disciple of Joneyd⁵⁵, who was the disciple of Sari-ye Saqaṭi, and Sari was the disciple of Ma'ruf-e Karkī.

The latter was the disciple of Dā'ud-e Ṭā'i, who was the disciple of Ḥabib-e 'Ajami, who was the disciple of Ḥasan of Basra.

Ḥasan was the disciple of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb -- *may God honor his countenance!*

'Ali was the disciple, cousin, and son-in-law of Moṣṭafā -- *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!*

These were the spiritual masters of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul, going back to Moṣṭafā -- God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!*⁵⁶

* * *

Thus, when our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went before Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan, Bu'l-Faḥl gave him a room opposite his own cell of seclusion and constantly watched over him and ordered what was necessary for refining his character and mortifying himself.

.....

Our Shaikh has related:

"One night when everyone was asleep and the doors of the *kānaqāh* and the gates of the *šārestan*⁵⁷ were closed. I was sitting at the front of the *soffa*⁵⁸ with Pir Bu'l-Faḥl and we were talking.

A difficult point came up concerning 'mystic knowledge'⁵⁹.

Just then we beheld Loqmān who flew⁶⁰ into the *kānaqāh* from above and sat down before us. He stated the problem and then answered it in such a way that it became clear to us and the difficulty disappeared.

Then he rose into the air again and left by the roof.

Pir Bu'l-Faḥl remarked: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, you see what rank this man holds at the divine royal court!'

I replied: 'Indeed, I do.'

He said: 'Loqmān is not an example to follow.'

I asked: 'Why is that?'

Pir Bu'l-Faḥl replied: 'He is devoid of formal religious knowledge⁶¹.'

* * *

When our Shaikh had practiced austerities for a certain time in the *kānaqāh*, Pir Bu'l-Faḥl ordered him to move his prayer-rug and belongings into his cell of retirement and for a while the Shaikh resided with Pir Bu'l-Faḥl in one cell. Day and night the *pir* watched over our Shaikh's spiritual state and ordered him to undertake different forms of ascetic discipline.

Then Pir Bu'l-Faḥl sent our Shaikh back to Meyhana, telling him: "Occupy yourself with serving your mother."⁶²

The Shaikh returned to Meyhana and withdrew into the cell of seclusion that had been his retreat.

* * *

The Shaikh now began to practice asceticism and was scrupulous in the extreme. He would constantly wash the doors and walls and when performing his ablutions, he would pour out several full measures of water from his ewer and for every prayer call he would perform a major ritual ablution⁶³.

He never leaned against a door, or the wall, or on a stick, or against a tree, or on a pillow, or anything else. And he didn't recline on rugs or cushions. During this period he only owned one tunic and each time it tore, he sewed a patch on it until, in the end, the tunic came to weigh twenty maunds⁶⁴.

The Shaikh never quarreled with anyone and except when absolutely necessary, he didn't speak to anyone.

During this period he fasted all day and only broke his fast in the evening with a single piece of bread. Night and day he remained awake.

In the middle of the wall of his cell of seclusion the Shaikh built a closet just high enough and wide enough for him to fit inside and he added a door to it. When he got in the closet, he would have the closet door, the door of his room, and the door of the house, all closed. Then he would perform his recitations and stuff his ears with cotton so that he would not hear any sound that might distract his attention but his spirit would remain concentrated.

Thus, the Shaikh constantly watched over his innermost conscience⁶⁵, so that nothing but God, *He is sublime and exalted*, might have access to his heart. And the Shaikh withdrew entirely from men at large.

When he had passed some time in this manner, he could no longer bear the company of men. The sight of people distracted him from his path. He was always going out into the open countryside and wandering about in the mountains and the desert, eating the licit fruits of the plains, and he would be lost for twenty days or a month at a time without anyone seeing him.

His father would search for him continually until he suddenly came upon him. Or one of the townspeople of Meyhana who had gone out for firewood, or someone farming, or a caravan, might catch sight of our Shaikh somewhere on the road and bring back news of him.

Then his father would go after him and bring him back. And the Shaikh, in order to please his father, would come home. But

when he had stayed a few days, he could no longer bear the disturbance of men's company. Once again he would run away and go back to the mountains and the desert.

Most times that the people of Meyhana caught sight of him in the desert and the mountains, they saw him in the company of an awesome old man dressed in white.

Later in life when our Shaikh had attained his high mystic rank, people asked him: "Oh Shaikh, those days we saw you, who was the awe inspiring old man you were with?"

Our Shaikh replied: "That was Keẓr⁶⁶ -- *peace be upon him!*"

* * *

I have seen written in the hand of Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem Joneyd b. 'Ali al-Šarmaqāni:

"I was accompanying Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, on the Meyhana road, walking alongside him. In front of a particular mountain, the Shaikh said to this humble sinner: 'Oh Bu'l-Qāsem, it was from this mountain that God, *mighty is His glory*, took Edris⁶⁷, *peace be upon him*, up to heaven. And it is written:

*"We raised him to a lofty place."*⁶⁸

.....

And the Shaikh pointed to the mountain known as Edris' Retreat, *peace be upon him*, which lies two *farsangs*⁶⁹ from Jarv and Tiyrān.

.....

Then the Shaikh said:

'On this mountain are people who come from the East and the West and remain here during the night. And numerous mosques have been built. I, too, have spent quite some time here.

One night I was on this mountain, at a spot where a precipice juts forth in such a way that if you stand there and look down, you will faint from fear.

On that occasion I spread out my prayer-rug on this precipice and declared that by the grace of God, *He is exalted*, I would recite the whole of the Qor'ān in two *rak'ats*⁷⁰. And I warned my

carnal soul: "If you go to sleep, you will fall over the edge and be dashed to pieces."

When I had recited part of the Qor'ān and made my first prostration, sleep prevailed over me. I went to sleep and that same instant I began to fall.

When I awoke, I saw I was in midair. I cried aloud for help. Out of His generosity the Lord God, *He is exalted*, took me from the air and set me down on the mountain."

* * *

The greater part of the Shaikh's time in retirement was spent in the Rebāṭ-e Kohan. This is a *rebāṭ*⁷¹ just outside Meyhana on the road to Abivard. It was here that our Shaikh underwent many ascetic austerities and much self-mortification.

The same is true of a hill called Za'qal which is not far from the gateway of Meyhana on the road to Marv.

Two *farsangs* from Meyhana on the road to Tus is a *rebāṭ* called Sar Kolah which stands at the foot of a mountain.

And there is another *rebāṭ* not far from the gate of Meyhana, on the way to the cemetery.

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"One day there was a lot of mud everywhere and I was feeling sad at heart. It was a moment of spiritual contraction⁷². I went and sat down before the door of my house. My mother came to the door and said: 'Come inside! You should come inside!'

I gave her a polite answer.

When I knew she had sat down, I rose to my feet and carrying my shoes in my hand, I set out for the Rebāṭ of the Cemetery.

When I reached the *rebāṭ*, I washed my feet in a small water course that was there. Then I put on my shoes and knocked at the door.

The custodian of the *rebāṭ* came and opened the door. He looked at my shoes and remarked: 'On a day like this with so much mud and mire, his shoes are dry!'

It came as a surprise to him.

I entered the *rebāṭ*, went into a certain small room and propped a piece of wood against the door. Then I recited the following prayer:

'Oh Lord God, almighty Sovereign, I beseech You by virtue of Your lordliness and Your sovereignty, by Your own claims upon Yourself, by Your majesty, Your magnificence, and Your grandeur, by Your power and Your glory, by Your absolute felicity.

Whatever others asked for and You gave them, whatever they did not ask for because their understanding could not conceive of it, yet You gave it to them as a distinction, whatever lies stored up and concealed in Your knowledge and no one is aware of it and no one has access to it and no one knows or understands it other than You – do not deny to this Your humble devotee, and grant that he attains his goals.'

When I had completed this invocation, I came out of the *rebāṭ* and went home again."

* * *

All these places which have been mentioned, are where the Shaikh practiced his devotions and sought repose. When the Shaikh was in Meyhana, this is where he spent most of his time. And there are many other places as well but to mention them all would prove tedious. The only benefit to be had from mentioning them at all is that, should God, *He is sublime and exalted*, bestow on someone the good fortune of arriving there, he may not be deprived of performing a pilgrimage to these blessed spots. And he may know that these were the places frequented by the Shaikh, and where that eminent man of religion, unique in the world, performed his devotions.

* * *

Thus, the Shaikh constantly fled from men at large. All alone in these places he would perform his devotions, engage in his struggle for spiritual purification and undergo ascetic austerities. Meanwhile, our Shaikh's father was constantly searching for him and would find him every month or so and, out of kindness, bring him back to Meyhana. And the Shaikh's father would take care of him and watch over him, so that he wouldn't suddenly run away again.

* * *

Our Shaikh's father has recounted:

"Every night when we had finished our bedtime prayers and come home, I would put the chain on the house door and watch until Bu Sa'id went to bed. Once he laid down and I thought he was asleep, I would go to bed myself.

On one occasion I woke up at midnight. When I looked about me, I didn't see Bu Sa'id on his bedding. I got up and looked for him in the house but I didn't find him. I went to the house door and saw that the door was not chained.

I came back and got in bed but remained on the alert.

Towards the call to morning prayer, Bu Sa'id quietly entered the house and put the chain back on the door. Then he got into his bedding and went to sleep.

For several nights I was on the alert and every night he did the same thing. I said nothing to him about the matter and pretended to be ignorant. But every night I was attentive.

Now, since he went out like this night after night, as is the wont of fathers, my heart wandered from one worry to another, as in the saying:

'The true friend is prone to fear the worst.'

I said to myself: 'He's a young man. I hope no one wicked, neither man nor Jinn⁷³, will lead him astray. After all:

"Youth is a form of madness."

Finally, I decided to observe him one night and see where he went and what he was doing.

One night when he got up and went out, I got up and followed after him. I persisted in following him from a distance, keeping my eye on him. And he was unaware of my presence.

Bu Sa'id walked on until he came to the Rebāṭ-e Kohan. He went inside and shut the door behind him. I climbed onto the roof of the rebāṭ. Bu Sa'id entered the room that served as the rebāṭ's mosque and closed the door, propping a piece of wood against it.

Meanwhile, I observed what he was doing through a window that looked into the room. He came into view and picked up a piece of wood that had been placed in one corner of the room. It had a rope attached to it. In another part of that mosque was a pit.

Bu Sa'id went to the edge of the pit, tied one end of the rope to his foot, and then laid the piece of wood with the rope attached to it, across the pit.

Now he hung upside down inside the pit and began reciting the Qor'ān. I remained there, listening.

By dawn he had recited the whole of the Qor'ān.

When he came to the end of the Qor'ān, he raised himself up out of the pit and put the piece of wood back in its place. Opening the door of the room, he came forth and performed his ritual ablutions in the middle of the *rebāṭ*.

I climbed down from the roof and returned home in haste. I got into bed in the usual manner. Then Bu Sa'id came home and lay down like every other night.

It was then the time I regularly woke up. I got out of bed and said nothing about this matter but I woke him as was usual, and we went to the prayer gathering.

For several nights after this I watched him and he did the same thing every night. For some time he was assiduous in practicing this form of self-mortification."

* * *

The Shaikh was constantly taking up a broom and sweeping out the mosques. And he would help the weak with their tasks.

Most nights climbing the tree that stands by the entrance to his sanctified sepulchral shrine⁷⁴, he would hang from a branch and perform recitations in all possible positions.

Even during periods of extreme cold, he would perform major ritual ablutions with cold water.

And the Shaikh undertook to serve the darvishes in person.

* * *

Once when he was speaking, it passed the Shaikh's lips:

"One day I said to myself: 'I have attained science, religious practice and meditation on God. Now absence from all this is necessary.'

I considered the situation and could find no way to achieve my insight but by serving the darvishes, in accordance with:

'When God desires the best for His devotee, He leads him to humiliate his self.'

Thus, I began to serve the darvishes.

I cleaned the place where they stayed, and their latrine and lavatory. I picked up a basket and undertook these important tasks. In my basket I took away the dirt and filth.

When I had persisted at this task for some time and it had become an ingrained habit, I began to beg for the darvishes. I have found nothing more difficult for the self to endure.

At first, whoever I met gave me one gold dinar⁷⁵. But as time went by, the sum decreased, until it came to be one *dāng*⁷⁶. And it decreased further, until it was one raisin and one nut. And people would give me no more than that.

Then one day a group of darvishes was on hand and nothing arrived in the way of donations.

I gave the turban I was wearing, on their behalf. After that I sold my shoes. Then I sold the lining of my cloak, then the outer part, and then the cotton.

One day my father met me. I was naked, with nothing to wear on my head, my feet, or my body. He could not bear the sight and said: 'Oh child, what do you call this state of affairs?'

I replied: 'This is known as a you-know-not-what from Meyhana!⁷⁷'

* * *

Thus, our Shaikh constantly swept the mosques and put his dignity at the disposal of the darvishes and the people at large, even when all he had was one loaf of bread and a single mouthful of food.

Meanwhile, if he met with any difficulty, he would walk barefoot to Saraks to visit Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan. When he had presented the problem and the difficulty was solved, he would return to Meyhana.

* * *

The following account goes back to Shaikh 'Abd al-Ṣamad through a sound chain of transmission, and he was a man of eminence and one of the Shaikh's disciples:

"Most times when our Shaikh went like this to Saraks, he walked in the air, suspended between heaven and earth. However, only 'those possessed of vision' could see him.

Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan had a disciple whose name was Aḥmad. One day he saw our Shaikh walking in the air. Aḥmad went to Pir Bu'l-Faḡl and said: 'Bu Sa'id of Meyhana is coming. And he's walking in the air, suspended between heaven and earth.'

Pir Bu'l-Faḡl asked: 'You saw this yourself?'

He replied: 'Yes, I saw it.'

The *pir* exclaimed: 'You shall not depart from this world, before you have gone blind.'

Shaikh 'Abd al-Ṣamad has related:

"Aḥmad did go blind at the end of his life, just as Pir Bu'l-Faḡl had predicted."

* * *

When our Shaikh had waged his spiritual struggle in this manner for some time, he returned to Pir Bu'l-Faḡl in Saraks. He stayed with Bu'l-Faḡl for one more year and the *pir* ordered him to undergo various forms of austerities.

Then Pir Bu'l-Faḡl instructed our Shaikh to go before Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Solami⁷⁸ and receive a mystic robe from him.

.....

Our Shaikh was invested with a mystic robe by Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Solami.

Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān was invested with a mystic robe by Abu'l-Qāsem-e Naṣrābādi⁷⁹ and Naṣrābādi was invested by Šebli⁸⁰.

Šebli was invested by Joneyd, who was invested by Sari-ye Saqaṭi, who was invested by Ma'ruf-e Karkī⁸¹.

The latter received his mystic robe from Ja'far al-Šādeq, who was invested by his own father, Moḥammad al-Bāqer, and al-Bāqer was invested by his own father, the Commander of the Faithful, Zeyn al-'Ābedin.

Zeyn al-'Ābedin received his mystic robe from his father, the Commander of the Faithful, Ḥoseyn and Ḥoseyn was invested by his father, the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb.⁸²

May God be pleased with each and every one of them!

'Ali was invested by Moḥammad-e Moṣṭafā -- God's blessings and peace be upon him!

.....

When our Shaikh received his mystic robe, he came before Pir Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan and Pir Bu'l-Faḡl told him: "Now it is completed! You must go back to Meyhana in order to call the people to God and give them advice and guide them on the path of the True."

In accordance with the *pir's* instructions, our Shaikh returned to Meyhana. There he increased his austerities and self-mortification and was not satisfied with what the *pir* had said, namely: "It is completed!"

Every day he increased his devotions and his spiritual struggle. And it was at this time that the people at large came to approve of the Shaikh.

With reference to some of that spiritual struggle, the following passed the Shaikh's blessed lips during an assembly.

One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was asked about the Qor'ānic verse:

*"Then they are returned unto God, their true Master."*⁸³

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said:

"Incorporeal beings⁸⁴ understand the meaning of this verse correctly. It refers to the final mystic station which comes after all the efforts, the religious devotions, journeys and dangers, hardships and humiliations, insults and contempt.

All this abuse, one form after the other, appears and the devotee is made to pass through it.

First, he is led to the door of contrition and he repents and gives contentment to his enemies. He busies himself humiliating his carnal soul. And he accepts every kind of hardship for himself, while he brings as much relief to mankind as he possibly can.

Then he undertakes various forms of religious devotions.

Nights he stays awake. During the day he goes hungry. He follows faithfully the precepts of Divine Law. Every day he undertakes another task and imposes various things on himself.

And I have done all this. In the beginning I imposed upon myself eighteen disciplines and by means of these eighteen duties I kept apart from myself the eighteen thousand worlds⁸⁵.

I fasted continually. I abstained from illicit foods. I continually performed recitations. Nights I remained awake. I didn't lie down

on the ground but only slept while sitting up. When I sat, I faced Mecca. I didn't lean on anything. I never looked at beardless boys with desire. I turned from things that are prohibited and didn't accept benefactions. I didn't beg. I was content with my lot. I applied myself to submission to God's will and careful observation. All my time I spent in the mosque. I didn't frequent the bazaars. For the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has said:

'The most polluted of places is the bazaar and the purest of places is the mosque.'

In whatever I did, I followed the Prophet's example – *God's blessings and peace be upon him!*

During the course of one day and night, I would recite the whole Qor'ān.

In my seeing I was blind, in my hearing I was deaf, in my speech I was dumb.

For one year I spoke to no one. People dubbed me a madman and I acquiesced in accordance with the Tradition:

'The devotee's faith has not reached perfection until men at large consider him insane.'

I undertook whatever I had written down⁸⁶ or heard that Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, had done or prescribed. I had written down that Moṣṭafā was wounded in the foot at the battle of Oḥod⁸⁷ and performed his recitations standing on his toes, because he couldn't place his foot on the ground. In imitation of the Prophet I stood on my toes and performed four hundred *rak'ats* of prayer.

I governed my thoughts and actions in accordance with the *Sonnat*⁸⁸, so that it became second nature to me.

Likewise, in the beginning of my spiritual career I did whatever I had heard or read in books that the angels do. Eventually, I heard and found in books that God, *He is exalted*, has angels who worship Him hanging upside down. To imitate them I stood on my head and had the mother of Bu Ṭāher, *God give her assistance*, tie my toes to a spike with string and close the door of the room on me.

Then I prayed: 'Oh Lord God, I do not want myself! Give me release from myself!'

And I began to recite the whole of the Qor'ān.

Book One

I came to the verse:

*'God shall be your sufficiency against them, for He is all-knowing and all-hearing.'*⁸⁹

Just then, blood flowed out of my eyes and I lost consciousness.

After that matters changed. I undertook ascetic austerities of this kind which are beyond description, and God, *He is exalted*, gave me the spiritual support and favor to carry them out.

However, I imagined this was my doing. God's grace appeared and showed me that such was not the case. This was all due to God's assistance and His divine favor. I repented and realized that all this had been conceit.

Now, you may say: 'I will not travel this path. It is conceit.'

I reply: 'Your non-action is conceit. Until all this passes over you, your conceit will not be revealed to you. Until you practice religious law to the full, this conceit will not become manifest.

The awareness of conceit comes with true religion and true religion comes after observance of the religious law.⁹⁰ Not to act is infidelity but to act and to see yourself act is to associate partners with God. There is you and there is He. There are two which is polytheism. Self must be eliminated.'

I retired from the world, in love with the annihilation of Self. A light appeared and effaced⁹¹ the darkness of my existence. The Lord God, *mighty is His glory*, showed me to myself, to the effect that: 'You were not that, nor are you this. That came from Our grace and this comes from Our favor. All exists through Our lordship and Our providential glance.'

Finally, I became such that I was ever repeating:

'When I open my eyes, your beauty is all I see.
Secrets I tell to you change flesh to heart.
To speak to men at large I deem forbidden.
Whenever they talk of you, my tongue grows long.'

Then I won so much approval in men's eyes that disciples gathered around me and repented. My neighbors refrained from drinking wine out of respect for me. Eventually, people would pay twenty dinars for a melon rind that fell from my hand.

One day I was riding a donkey and the donkey dropped dung. People came and rubbed the dung on their heads and faces.

Then it was revealed to me that this was not of my doing.
A voice came forth from a corner of the mosque, saying:

*'And is your Lord God not sufficient unto you?'*⁹²

A light appeared in my breast and most of the veils were lifted. Whoever from among the people had accepted me, now rejected me and it reached the point where they went before the *qāzi* and denounced me as an unbeliever.

Whatever region I passed through, people would say: 'That man's evil influence stops the plants from growing in this region.'

Then one day I was sitting in a mosque. Women went up onto the roof and threw down excrement on my head.

Again the voice sounded forth:

'And is your Lord God not sufficient unto you?'

Finally, the congregation of that mosque refused to gather for prayers, saying: 'While that madman is inside the mosque, we will not convene for prayer.'

I recited the verses:

'When I was a lion, the leopard was my prey.
I was triumphant in every task I tackled.
Then your love came and tightly gripped my heart.
Now the lame fox can chase me from the forest.'

Meanwhile, in the midst of all this a state of spiritual contraction came over me. Seeking guidance, I opened a complete text of the Qor'ān at random and met with the verse:

*'We shall afflict you with good and with evil as a trial, and unto Us you shall be returned.'*⁹³

God was saying: 'All this is an affliction which We place on your path. Whether it be good, it is an affliction, or whether it be evil, it is an affliction. Do not be engaged in good and evil but turn to Us.'

After this I was no longer there. His grace was all that remained.

'Today in all ways Baghdad is Bokhara.

With the Prince of Khorasan comes victory⁹⁴.'

God bless Moḥammad and his family!"

The section presented above consists of the words which once passed the Shaikh's blessed lips during a public discourse.

* * *

It was in the midst of these circumstances that the father and mother of our Shaikh transferred their souls to the mercy of God – *He is sublime and exalted!* Thus, the restraints based on consideration for his parents were removed from his path.

The Shaikh set out for the desert that lies between Meyhana and Bāvard, and Marv and Saraks. For seven years he practiced ascetic austerities and self-mortification in the desert. The result was that no one saw him *"except when God, He is sublime, permitted"* and no one knew what food he had during those seven years.

I heard from my own spiritual guides and it is common knowledge among elite and ordinary people of the region that during those seven years the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, ate twigs from the tamarisk and the *ṭāq* tree, and brambles.

.....

It has been related that when our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had reached his renowned spiritual level, one day he was sitting by the entrance to his sepulchral shrine⁹⁵ – *God, He is exalted, perpetuate the blessed shrine!* On that occasion, one of his disciples was picking up slices of sweet watermelon with a knife, dipping them in powdered sugar and giving them to the Shaikh to eat.

A certain person who disapproved of "this affair"⁹⁶ passed by and said: "Oh Shaikh, how does what you're eating now taste compared with the brambles and tamarisk twigs you ate those seven years in the desert? Which tastes better?"

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, replied: "Both foods have the taste of the moment. If the attribute of the moment is one of spiritual expansion, tamarisk twigs and brambles taste better than this melon.

But if the moment's form is one of spiritual contraction, in accordance with: *'God tightens and expands'*⁹⁷, and what is sought after remains veiled, this sugar will be more unpleasant than those brambles."

.....

This is why the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "Whoever saw me at the beginning became a true believer and whoever saw me at the end became a heretic."

That is to say, at the beginning of his spiritual state the Shaikh was engaged in ascetic practices and the struggle for purification. Since, generally, men view the exterior and are overly impressed by appearances, when they beheld the Shaikh's early mode of life and witnessed his striving on God's path, their faith in that path increased and they attained the rank of true believers.

At the end of the Shaikh's development, however, it was the period of witnessing and the time when he enjoyed the fruits of his spiritual struggle and complete unveiling occurred. And eminent men have said:

"Witnessings are the legacy of spiritual struggle."

Hence, the Shaikh necessarily lived in a state of ease and abundance. Whoever saw him like this and was unaware of his earlier circumstances, disapproved of what was true and whoever disapproves of the true, is a heretic.

There are numerous analogies with this situation. The following is one from among the many.

If someone intends to serve a king and in his heart there is the firm wish to draw near to the king and to become his companion and confidant, he will surely be obliged to undergo all manner of hardships before attaining such a rank. He will have to suffer pains and afflictions at the royal court and experience hunger, heat and cold, both at home and abroad, and hear insults and abuse from men of distinction and mere nobodies.

He must have patience and bear up with all this and accept these hardships and pains with a cheerful mien and an agreeable temper. In return for each abuse he will render a service and repay every insult with ten compliments and benedictions.

And so he perseveres, until he reaches that high rank and lofty office.

When he is honored with the king's approval and attains the dignity of proximity at the royal court, he will have to perform

numerous pleasing services even at a risk to his own life, if the king is to come to rely on him.

However, once the king does deign to rely on him and accords him proximity and the rank of royal confidant, all the difficult tasks, the perilous risks and hardships, are removed. Now all becomes favor, proximity and ease, and every form of comfort and pleasure is at hand.

No other service is required of this person but attendance upon the royal presence and, of course, he may not be absent from the royal court, not even for the blinking of an eye, neither day nor night. Any moment that the king summons him to tell him a secret or to bestow on him the honor of his company, the servant will be on hand.

The stages set forth above are perfectly clear and the analogy they express should be obvious.

.....

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related: "Whenever I met with a problem, I would go before Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan at night and having found a solution, that same night I would go back to my own place."

Having spent seven years residing in the desert in that manner, the Shaikh returned to Meyhana.

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"After that I felt the need for Shaikh Bu'l-ʿAbbās-e Qaṣṣāb⁹⁸, who was the only remaining spiritual master.

Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan had gone over to the mercy of God -- *He is exalted!* While Pir Bu'l-Faẓl was still alive, any problem I had, I referred to him. Once he had gone under the earth's veil, there was no one designated to assist me but Shaikh Bu'l-ʿAbbās-e Qaṣṣāb."

.....

Our Shaikh Bu Saʿid, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, never called any of the spiritual masters "shaikh" in the absolute sense, except Shaikh Abu'l-ʿAbbās-e Qaṣṣāb. He addressed Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan as "*pir*", for Bu'l-Faẓl was our Shaikh's spiritual initiator.

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"Then I set out for Āmol, passing by way of Abivard and Nasā, since I wished to make a pilgrimage to the tombs of the spiritual masters.

Aḥmad-e Najjār and Moḥammad-e Fazl were accompanying me."

.....

Moḥammad-e Fazl was from the beginning through to the end an associate of our Shaikh and one of his intimate companions. His tomb stands near the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Fazl-e Ḥasan in Saraks.

.....

Our Shaikh goes on to relate:

"The three of us went to Abivard and from there, passing by way of Darra-ye Gaz, we set out for Šāh-meyhana."

.....

This is one of the villages of the district of Darra-ye Gaz by Abivard, and previously the village was called Šāmeyna.

.....

When our Shaikh had arrived and visited the tomb of Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Kuji which is located there, he asked: "What is this village called?"

They replied: "Šāmeyna."

The Shaikh said: "The village should be called Šāh-meyhana."

From that time on, the village has been called Šāh-meyhana, for the sake of acquiring blessings and in accordance with the Shaikh's eminent instruction.

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"We decided to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Pir Bu 'Ali. Meanwhile, a certain difficulty⁹⁹ had entered my mind. When we arrived near his tomb, we caught sight of a stream with a rock by one of its banks. On this rock we performed our ablutions and two rak'ats of prayer.

Then we noticed a boy driving an ox and plowing the earth. Alongside him was an old man, sowing millet seed. He appeared to be in a state of bewilderment. Every other moment he would look over at Bu 'Ali's tomb and let out a shout. This old man caused some agitation in my breast.

The old man came up to us and greeting us with 'salaam', he asked: 'Can you lift a burden from this old man's heart?'

I replied: "*If God, He is exalted, so wishes!*"

He went on: 'This moment the following thought weighs upon my heart. Imagine that the Lord God, *He is sanctified and exalted*, having created this world, put no living creatures in it but filled it up completely with millet seed – from East to West, from the earth to the heavens – and then created a bird and said: "Every thousand years one grain of this is yours to eat."

Then imagine that the Lord God created one man and in the man's breast placed a longing for "this higher meaning"¹⁰⁰ and said to him: "Until this bird empties the world of all this millet seed, you shall not reach the goal, but you shall remain in your present pain and longing."

I am thinking even that would be quick (in view of the task at hand)."

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, goes on to relate:

"My difficulty was solved by this old man and acts of the spirit were unblocked for me.

Upon visiting the tomb of Pir Bu 'Ali, we received much honor¹⁰¹. Then we set out for Nasā."

* * *

When our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, reached the region of Nasā, he came to a village called Andarmān, which is situated alongside the city. He thought to stop there and asked: "What do people call this village?"

They replied: "Andarmān."

The Shaikh said: "We shall not enter, lest we be unable to proceed!"¹⁰²

The Shaikh did not go into the village, nor did he stop. And he did not enter Nasā but passed through the villages located below the city, and headed for Beysma.

.....

At that time Shaikh Aḥmad-e Naṣr, one of the great spiritual masters, was in the city of Nasā, in the Kānaqāh of Sarāvi. This kānaqāh is situated above the city by the Barākuh Cemetery, where the graves of the shaikhs and the tombs of the eminent are located.

.....

Ostād Abu ‘Ali-ye Daqqāq¹⁰³ built this kānaqāh following the instructions of Moṣṭafā – *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!* When Ostād Bu ‘Ali came to Nasā to make a pilgrimage to the tombs of the shaikhs, there was no sanctuary for the Sufis.

That night when he went to sleep, he beheld Moṣṭafā in a dream, *peace be upon him*, and the Prophet ordered him: "Build a sanctuary here for the Sufis."

The Prophet pointed to the spot where the kānaqāh now stands and drew a line around the plot of land to show what size the kānaqāh should be.

Early the next morning, Ostād Bu ‘Ali rose to his feet and went to the spot. The same line which Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, had drawn in the dream, was visible on the ground. Everyone saw it.

Ostād, following the same outline, laid out the walls of the kānaqāh and the blessed sanctuary and built them. Since then, the blessed footsteps of many shaikhs and venerable men have arrived at this sanctuary, and even today its foundations remain and are visible.

.....

The Barākuh Cemetery which is situated alongside the kānaqāh, contains the tombs of four hundred spiritual guides from among the great shaikhs and famous Friends of God.

Moreover, the Sufis have named Nasā "Little Syria" because just as the tombs of the prophets are in Syria, *God's blessings and peace be upon them, one and all*, the tombs of the Friends of God are in Nasā – *God sanctify their souls!*

The land of Nasā is a truly eminent and venerable land. It has always been adorned with the presence of great shaikhs, possessors of miraculous powers, and men who have progressed through the mystic stages.

The spiritual masters have said: "Whatever afflictions and civil strife occur throughout the rest of Khorasan, when they reach Nasā, they come to an end."

In the present day and age, often enough have we witnessed the truth of this point with our own eyes. During the last thirty years or so, while civil disorders, plundering and pillaging, killing and burning, have been occurring in Khorasan and still occur, God, *He is sublime and exalted*, through His grace and generosity and by means of the blessings from the tombs of the departed shaikhs, *God sanctify their souls*, and the efforts of the shaikhs and venerable men who remain -- *God increase their number and perpetuate their blessings* -- has warded off every affliction and calamity that was about to overtake Nasā.

Even in this age when religion is scarce and there is a dearth of Islam -- especially in Khorasan, where Sufism and the mystic path no longer remain, neither in name, nor in practice, neither as an experience, nor as mere talk -- in Nasā upright shaikhs and Sufis adorned with spiritual states and "moments" are still to be found in great numbers. And may they persist for many years to come.

Thus, the sense of the following Tradition is necessarily made all the more manifest:

"Due to them they are provided with daily bread and due to them they are given rain."

Moreover, many concealed venerable men reside in the region of Nasā, men such that not one of their kind can be found throughout many other regions. Although they are hidden from common people's sight under the veil of:

"My Friends under My domes¹⁰⁴ and no one knows them but Me."

– nonetheless, the effects of their good fortune and the blessings from their utterances, are very numerous and clear.

.....

Thus, Shaikh Aḥmad-e Naṣr was residing in the Kānaqāh of Sarāvi and in the kānaqāh he had a cell of seclusion which is known today as "the Shaikh's Quarters". Sticking his head out of his cell of seclusion, whose door opened on to the *soffa*¹⁰⁵ where the group of Sufis was sitting, he said: "Whoever wishes to meet the Royal Falcon of the mystic path, behold he is passing by! Go to Beysma and you will find him there."

* * *

The Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:
"When we reached Nasā, we set out for Bēysma, intending to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Shaikh Aḥmad-e 'Ali."

.....

Beysma is a village two *farsangs*¹⁰⁶ from Nasā and the tomb of Shaikh Aḥmad-e Nasavi is located there. He was one of the famous spiritual masters of Khorasan and had been the disciple of Shaikh Bu 'Osmān-e Ḥiri¹⁰⁷. Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Solami¹⁰⁸ in his book *The Classes of the Leading Sufis* gives his name as Moḥammad-e 'Olyān-e Nasavi¹⁰⁹ but in the region of Nasā he was known as Aḥmad-e 'Ali.

Aḥmad-e 'Ali had experienced exalted states and possessed manifest miraculous gifts. One example from among the many is this.

After our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had returned from this journey and his spiritual powers were made public, he sent K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher, who was our Shaikh's eldest son, to Nasā because of the Sufis' debts¹¹⁰. When K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher reached Nasā, he contracted a pain in his foot, such that he was unable to walk.

Meanwhile, during K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher's absence, a son was born to our Shaikh in Meyhana and the Shaikh named him Moṭahhar. And the Shaikh, through his clairvoyance and miraculous gifts, was aware of the pain in K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher's foot.

The Shaikh called a darvish and told him to go to Bu Ṭāher in Nasā. And the Shaikh wrote a letter to K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher, saying:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful -- 'We shall strengthen your arm through your brother.'"¹¹¹

I am informed that you are suffering from a pain in the foot. You must go to the grave of Aḥmad-e 'Ali in Beysma and your illness will be cured, *if God is willing -- He is exalted!*"

When K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher received the letter, he set out to visit the grave. He was carried from Nasā to Beysma in a litter and he spent one night at the tomb of Shaikh Aḥmad-e 'Ali. The next day God, *He is sublime and exalted*, cured him and the illness disappeared

completely, so that he walked a great part of the way when returning to the city.

* * *

The Shaikh goes on to relate:

"We made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Aḥmad-e 'Ali. Meanwhile, I was preoccupied with a difficulty¹¹². We entered the village and passed out through the other side.

An old butcher was sitting on the platform of his shop, wearing a fur cloak¹¹³. Meat was hung up in front of him. He came before us and greeted us with "salaam". And he sent his assistant after us to see where we would stop. We stopped by a stream with a mosque alongside it and there we performed our ablutions and two *rak'ats*¹¹⁴ of prayer.

The old man came and offered us food. We ate and when we had finished, the old butcher said: 'Can one of you answer a question I have?'

The others pointed to me.

He asked: 'What are the conditions of the bondsman and what are the conditions of the hireling?'¹¹⁵

I gave an answer in accordance with external religious knowledge.

He said: 'Is there anything more than that?'

I answered in accordance with the mystic path and the words of the spiritual masters.

He said: 'Is there anything more than that?'

I looked at him in silence.

The old man glared at me sternly and said: 'Do not consort with a woman you have divorced!'

.....

That is to say, you have repudiated outward religious knowledge. Do not take up with it again.

The point being made was this. When Loqmān took our Shaikh before Pir Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan, Pir Bu'l-Faḥl had ordered him to undertake all those forms of spiritual discipline and self-mortification. The Shaikh had turned away from knowledge based on words to the knowledge of ecstatic states.

When, during his ascetic disciplines and spiritual struggle, the Shaikh attained the state of ecstasy and experienced the pleasure of

that state, all the books he had read and whatever he had written down and collected, he buried in the ground and on top of the books he raised a mound. Then he broke off a branch of myrtle with his own blessed hand and implanted it in the mound over his books. In a short while the branch took root, sprouted leaves, and grew into a big tree with many branches.

The inhabitants of our region would make use of the branches when a child was born, or when preparing the dead and enshrouding them -- as a grace bestowing relic planted by the Shaikh's own blessed hand. And the branches were carried to far off districts and men of importance in the world, who came to Meyhana to perform a pilgrimage, would take away with them souvenirs of this sacred relic.

Within my own day and age, the tree was still green and flourishing and up until the disaster of Khorasan and the interlude of the Gozz¹¹⁶, it still remained. But then this calamity befell and for the last thirty years or so, it has grown worse every day and who knows how much longer it will last. Like the other grace-bestowing vestiges of the Shaikh, this too has not endured but has been effaced.

.....

With reference to the previous point our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had the following word to say in one of his assemblies:

"When 'this affair'¹¹⁷ first opened before me, I possessed many books and innumerable shorter written works. I would go through them one after the other, reading endlessly but I found no peace.

I beseeched the Lord God, *mighty is His glory*: 'Oh Lord, reading these sciences affords me no inner relief. By my reading, I remain separated from You. Free me from the need of these books by means of something in which I will find You, so that I may experience peace from all this.'

God accorded me His favor. I began to eliminate those books and I experienced some degree of peace. I went on until I came to the *Tafsir-e Ḥaqā'eq*¹¹⁸. This book I had to read. I began with the *Fāteḥa*¹¹⁹ and went on through the chapters The Heifer, The Family of 'Emrān, Women, The Table, and Cattle, until I reached the passage:

Book One

*'Say Allah, and leave them to amuse themselves with idle talk.'*¹²⁰

At this point I put the book down. As much as I tried, I could not advance one verse further. Thus, I eliminated this book as well."

* * *

At the time that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, buried his books and raised that mound and placed his books in it and covered them with earth, news was brought to the Shaikh's father, Bābu Bu'l-Keyr, to the effect that: "Come! All that vast amount that Bu Sa'id copied from books and collected, his notes and everything he learned, he is burying in the ground and pouring water over it."

The Shaikh's father came and said: "Oh my son, what is this you're doing?"

The Shaikh replied: "Do you remember the time I came into your shop and asked what's in these sacks and what have you put in these bags? You told me: 'It's a you-won't-understand from Balk'¹²¹."

He said: "I remember."

The Shaikh said: "This is a you-won't-understand from Meyhana."

.....

On the occasion that the Shaikh was throwing earth over his books, he looked at them and said:

"You are the best of guides but once the goal has been reached, it is absurd to be concerned with guides."

Once when our Shaikh was speaking at a later time, it passed his blessed lips:

"The foundation of 'this higher matter' consists in breaking ink-wells, tearing up books, and forgetting the sciences."

When our Shaikh, having buried his books, planted that myrtle branch over them and poured water on it, some eminent persons said to him: "Oh Shaikh, surely it were better to have

bestowed these books on someone who could derive profit from them."

Our Shaikh replied:

"I wanted my heart to be completely free from imposing an obligation on the recipient and being reminded of the gift whenever I see him."

* * *

The following also passed the Shaikh's blessed lips, *God sanctify his awesome soul*:

"One day I was looking at a fascicle¹²² that belonged to K^vāja Imam Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān. I heard the words: 'Looking at a book are you? Do you want us to send you back to books?'

I repented and for some time prayed for forgiveness until they pardoned me for this."

.....

One of our Shaikh's companions has related:

"One night our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went on moaning in his cell of seclusion until dawn. For this reason I was troubled and upset the whole night and couldn't sleep for worry right up until the morning.

The next day when the Shaikh came forth, I asked him: 'Oh Shaikh, what was it last night that was making you moan?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Yesterday I noticed a fascicle of paper in the hands of a certain scholar. I borrowed it from him and read parts of it. All last night I was punished with a toothache and I kept hearing the words:

"Why do you consort with what you have put aside in divorce?"'

* * *

The Shaikh goes on to relate:

"The old butcher said: 'Until you become free, you will not be a bondsman and until you become a sincere and virtuous hireling, you will not attain Paradise "as a reward for what they have done".'"¹²³

And the Shaikh added:

"My difficulty¹²⁴ was solved by this old man."

* * *

From here the Shaikh went before Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb in Āmol and remained with him for one year.

.....

That is according to the sounder account. Another account relates that he stayed in Āmol for two and a half years but this is the weaker account.

.....

In his *kānaqāh* Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb had a cell of retirement -- in the assembly room among the Sufis -- which was shaped like a penfold. There, in the midst of the group, he had resided for forty-one years.

Nights if a darvish performed additional prayers, Bu'l-'Abbās would say: "Go to sleep, my child. Whatever this old man undertakes, he does for all of you. It's of no use to him. He has no need of it himself."

However, while our Shaikh was in the *kānaqāh*, Bu'l-'Abbās never said this to him. Every night our Shaikh prayed until dawn and he fasted during the day. And our Shaikh has said: "He never told me 'sleep and don't pray', like he said to the others."

When our Shaikh arrived before Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb, Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās gave our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a cell opposite his "penfold". And our Shaikh stayed there during the night, engaged continually in self-mortification.

Moreover, he constantly kept his eye to the crack of the door and watched over Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās' circumstances.

One day Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās had been bled. That night the bandage on his arm came undone and the vein opened again. Bu'l-'Abbās' arm and his robe were contaminated.

Bu'l-'Abbās came forth from the "penfold". And our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, since he was constantly on the look-out to be of service to Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās, inquiring after his circumstances and watching over his states, immediately came out of his cell.

Our Shaikh went before Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās and washed and purified his arm and bound it up. Then he took Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās' robe and gave him his own robe. Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās put on the robe and went back to his cell of retirement.

Our Shaikh put on a coarse garment he had, and washed and purified Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb's robe. He then hung it on a

line and that night it was dry. Having smoothed it out and folded it, he brought it before Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās.

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās instructed him: "It is yours to wear."

Our Shaikh has said: "Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās, with his own blessed hand, dressed me in his robe."

And that was the second mystic robe our Shaikh received.

* * *

Let no one imagine that if you have received a mystic robe from one spiritual director, it is not right to accept such a robe from another spiritual director, for the mystery of donning the mystic robe is as follows:

To be a *pir* of the mystic path, competent to bestow a robe of initiation, that is to say, worthy of emulation, one must know the science of religious law, the science of the mystic path, and the science of Truth, and have put these three sciences into practice to perfection. Moreover, one must have seen and be experienced in, the nature of the stages and the particulars of the halting stations and the resting places along these roads, and have become purged of human attributes, so that nothing of the concupiscent soul remains.

Such was the import of what Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni¹²⁵ said about our Shaikh when the Shaikh came to visit him: "Here nothing of human nature remains. Here no concupiscent self remains. There is only the True! There is only the True!"

And this story will be related in its proper place. My present purpose was to cite evidence.

When such a *pir* becomes familiar with an aspirant's state, and comes to know by trial and experience his innermost heart, as well as his exterior, and perceives his worthiness with the inner and the outer eye, and realizes that the disciple now deserves to progress from the station of service to the other darvishes to that of acceptance and has completed the preparations for passing beyond ascetic disciplines and self-mortification to admission into the mystic community -- he then places his hand on the disciple's head and invests him with a mystic robe, as if to announce to people at large: "I have established and verified that this person is worthy of the mystic community's company and supervision."

Nor does it matter whether the disciple's capacity is the result of that same *pir's* supervision, or the instruction, guidance and supervision of another competent *pir*.

If, within the mystic community, this *pir* is of recognized authority and held in esteem, every one will have confidence in his attestation, as with the testimony of a just witness and the pronouncement of a competent judge in the domain of religious law.

That is why, when a darvish comes to a *kānaqāh* or wishes to keep company with a group of other darvishes and the Sufis don't know him, they ask him: "Who was the spiritual director who initiated you and from whose hand did you receive the mystic robe?"

These two affiliations carry great authority within the mystic community. In fact, on the mystic path no other ties of affiliation besides these two exist. The Sufis do not consider as one of their own and do not admit into their company, anyone who is not correctly affiliated in both these ways with a competent spiritual director.

Much could be said concerning spiritual directors, discipleship, the mystic robe and the process of initiation. But an exposition of that subject cannot be included in the present collection, nor was it my purpose in writing this work to give an account of it.

Moreover, if a person, by virtue of ascetic practices and the life he has led, attains a high and wonderful spiritual degree without following a *pir* and a guide, the Sufi community will not recognize him as one of its own.

Indeed, our Shaikh has said:

"Whoever has not been instructed by a master, is worthless. Even if a man reaches the highest stages and stations, such that matters of the Unseen are revealed to him, if he has not had a guide and a master, nothing at all will come of him."

The spiritual director is the pivot of the mystic path, in accordance with:

"The shaikh is to his community, what the prophet is to his nation."

It has been verified and proven that no one of his own accord can arrive anywhere. Spiritual masters have had much to say on this topic and their words contain countless points of wisdom. This is especially true of our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome*

soul, and some of his sayings will be presented in the appropriate place, *if God is willing -- He is exalted!*

If this matter takes hold of a person and the love and burning of "this affair"¹²⁶ grips his skirts, his painful longing will be such that it compels him to serve at the court of the shaikhs and he will dwell constantly at the threshold of the *pirs*, in order to profit from their precepts, for this science is only to be acquired through the path of love:

"Religion is not wishing nor affectation but something firmly established in the heart and confirmed by actions."

Oh you, who know not "burnt" and "what must burn",
Love is what comes, not something you can learn.

Let no one adopt a pretext and excuse himself with words to the effect that: "In this day and age no competent *pir* exists and no one is discernible among the shaikhs who is comparable to the spiritual guides of the past."

Such talk is an enticement of the carnal soul and a pretext for sloth.

Whoever is disposed towards "this affair" and has a passion for this path, his case is as Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e *Karaqāni*¹²⁷, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "In the beginning you must do two things. One is journeying and the other is you must take a master.

With this thought in mind I went on searching and it was difficult for me. God, *He is exalted*, saw to it that whenever I was distressed by a question, a scholar of the *Šāfe'i* school of jurisprudence came and explained the matter for me.

For seventy-three years I have lived my life in conformity with the true, so that I have not performed one prostration contrary to the Law, nor have I lived for one instant in compliance with my carnal soul."

And he said he traveled in the following manner: "It has been granted me to traverse with one step all that lies between the Celestial Throne¹²⁸ and the earth."

When love's passion is sincere and devotion is pure, such are the fruits of life.

Amongst the spiritual guides of the mystic community there is a great principle that all are one and one is all. Among all Sufis of the world there is no opposition and contradiction. Indeed, for

Book One

whoever is a Sufi, there is no two-ness, whereas the Sufi of mere appearance, being devoid of reality, is not here under consideration.

If some discrepancy appears in the forms of words which the shaikhs use to express themselves, the essential meanings are all one.

Thus, if someone puts on a mystic robe which he receives from a spiritual guide, that is known as the robe of origin. Other mystic robes which he receives, are called robes of benediction.

Looking at this question in the light of reality, since all are one, all their hands are one and all their glances are one, and it is the same for mystic robes. Whoever is accepted by one is accepted by all. And whoever is rejected by one, is likewise rejected by all – *God ward off the evil!*

You might say that a person who dons two mystic robes is presenting, in the form of investiture by spiritual masters and blessings from their hand, two honest witnesses on behalf of his worthiness.

In the end God knows best!

* * *

With regard to this point, take heed of the apt verification that follows. If you grasp this verification thoroughly, no doubt will remain as to the fact that all *pirs* and all true Sufis are one, there being no two-ness among them in any sense.

Know that all faiths and religions are in agreement and all men of sense consider it to be proven that the object of worship and the goal, *glory be to His majesty*, is one, and that is the True, *glory be to His majesty and may His names be sanctified*, Who is single in every respect and Who admits of no two-ness whatsoever.

If, concerning the traveler or the road taken, some difference exists, once the final goal is reached, differences cease and all is transformed into unity.

As long as any human attributes remain within the traveler, he has not yet reached the goal and there will appear a mutability of states in the traveler on the path. When he reaches his goal and what he has sought, none of all that will remain in him. All will become absolute oneness.

This is the reason why one of the spiritual masters has declared: *"I am the Truth!"*¹²⁹

And another has said: "Glory be to Me!"¹³⁰

And our Shaikh has declared: "Inside this¹³¹ robe there is only God!"

Consequently, it stands verified that as long as the traveler has not reached the goal, he is not worthy to be a spiritual guide. He is still in need of a *pir* to give him guidance along the road. Whereas, whoever has reached the goal, is worthy of being a spiritual guide.

Thus, the words of the spiritual masters have been borne out by demonstration, for when they said all are one and one is all, they were referring to the arrival at the goal. No doubt in this matter remains since, if all are one and one is all, their hands and their mystic robes are all one.

Whoever says a person must not accept a mystic robe from two spiritual guides, gives away the fact that he is still in the world of two-ness and sees and knows the guides in terms of two and has no understanding of the states of spiritual guides.

Once his sight is with Him and his glance alights on this world, then he becomes a perceiver of Truth.

On the other hand, should a person mean by the above objection that one must not accept a second mystic robe with the intention of repudiating the first robe, in that case the objection is valid. If such is the intention, it is in no way right and he must not do it. If anyone acts in this manner, the first mystic robe he donned becomes nullified and the second one is forbidden to him.

Among Sufis he will be repudiated and deprived of both mystic robes. God protect us from that!

.....

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb received his mystic robe from Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh al-Ṭabari, who received his robe from Bu Moḥammad-e Joreyri and he received his from Joneyd.

Joneyd was invested by the hand of Sari-ye Saqaṭi and he was invested by Ma'ruf-e Karkī, who was invested by Dā'ud-e Ṭā'i, who was invested by Ḥabib-e 'Ajami.

Ḥabib had received his robe from Ḥasan of Basra and Ḥasan had been invested by the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb -- *God be pleased with them, one and all!*

'Ali received his mystic robe from Moṣṭafā -- *God's blessings and peace be upon the Prophet!*¹³²

* * *

After this our Shaikh Abu Sa'id returned to his cell. The following morning when they had finished their prayers, the members of the group looked to Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās and saw that he was wearing Shaikh Bu Sa'id's robe and Shaikh Bu Sa'id was wearing his robe. Everyone was surprised and wondered what this situation could mean.

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās said: "Yes, last night certain signs appeared and all went to the lot of this young man from Meyhana. May it prove a blessing for him!"

Then Bu'l-'Abbās turned to our Shaikh and said: "Return to Meyhana that in a few days this banner may be raised in front of your house."

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related: "Following his instructions I returned home possessed of one hundred thousand spiritual gifts and favors. Disciples gathered around me and acts of the spirit came to pass¹³³."

When our Shaikh reached Meyhana, Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās died in Āmol. Then our Shaikh's acts of the spirit began.

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"During the time that I was in Āmol, one day I was sitting with Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās and two men entered the room and sat down before him. They said: 'Oh Shaikh, we have been discussing with one another and one of us maintains: "An eternity of sorrow is more fitting."

The other maintains: "Eternal joy is preferable."

What does the Shaikh have to say?"

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās drew his hand over his face and replied: '*Praise be to God*, the halting station of this butcher's son¹³⁴ is neither sorrow, nor joy!

"For your Lord God there is no day or night."

Sorrow and joy are your own attribute and whatever is your attribute, is created and the created has no access to the non-created.'

Then he said: 'This butcher's son is God's servant, obeying His commands and prohibitions, and is the bondsman of Moṣṭafā, conforming to the example of the Prophet's life.

If anyone claims to follow the path of chivalrous heroes¹³⁵, this will bear witness to it. What I'm referring to is no device of old ladies¹³⁶. It is the very battle ground of young heroes.'

When both persons had left, I asked: 'Who were these two men?'

He replied: 'One was Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni and the other was Bu 'Abdollāh-e Dāstāni¹³⁷.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"One day I was in the presence of Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb. While conversing he said: 'Allusion and direct designation¹³⁸ are your apportioned share of God's Oneness, whereas the existence of the Real, *He is exalted*, has no part in allusion or designation.'

Then he turned to me and said: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, if they ask you whether you know God, do not answer: "I know Him."

That would be to set up partners with God. And do not say: "I do not know Him."

That would be infidelity. But say:

"God make known to me His essence and His divinity -- through His bounty!""

.....

Our Shaikh has said:

"One day Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās while speaking among his group, remarked: 'Bu Sa'id is the lovely favorite of the realm.'"

* * *

Šeyk al-Eslām Abu Sa'd, the grandfather of this well-wisher, has related:

"This higher meaning¹³⁹ was unveiled before the Shaikh when he was forty years old."

.....

Book One

Indeed, it could not be otherwise, for the Friends who are the deputies of the prophets, do not attain the full degree of Friendship and miraculous powers before the age of forty. The same is true of the one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets who only attained to the fulness of prophethood at the age of forty.

*"Until he attained his maturity and reached the age of forty."*¹⁴⁰

The only exceptions were John, the son of Zacharias, and Jesus, the son of Mary, since prophethood and divine revelation were conferred upon them before they were forty -- *God's blessings be upon them both and on the prophets, one and all!*

Thus, with reference to John it is written:

*"Take this book with a firm resolve. And We bestowed upon him wisdom, though he was a child."*¹⁴¹

And with regard to Jesus, it has been reported:

"They exclaimed: 'How can we talk to one who is still a babe in the cradle?'

He replied: 'I am God's bondsman. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet.'"142

.....

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, undertook ascetic practices and self-mortification for all of forty years and although he experienced unveiling and a mystic state before that, he continued practicing austerities in order to render his state complete and of permanent duration.

The Shaikh referred to this during an assembly when he was asked about the Qor'ānic verse:

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:

*Did any span of time ever elapse for man, during which he was a thing unremembered?"*¹⁴³

The Shaikh's comment was: "For forty years Adam's frame¹⁴⁴ was left lying between Ṭāyef and Mecca.

*'Verily, We created man from a drop of sperm, a mingling, that We might test him.'*¹⁴⁵

We placed the humors inside him. As humors of trial and affliction, We placed in his breast forms of idolatry, doubt and egotism, quarrelsomeness, disapproval, hostility, and anxiety, and all the problems that come from mankind's sense of 'I' and 'you' -- during 'a span of time', namely, during forty years.

Now, in accordance with:

'He has attained his maturity and reached the age of forty...'

-- in forty years We eliminate all this from the breast of our Friends and make them pure.

Consequently, these devotional practices come to an end after forty years. Any explanation which is other than what I have said is not correct. Anyone who has practiced self-mortification for less than forty years, has not completed the task.

Depending on the intensity of his austerities, the veil will be lifted and 'this affair'¹⁴⁶ will be revealed to him but it will return under the veil and whatever goes under the veil is still not perfected.

These words are not what I have merely heard.
I am speaking from my own experience."

* * *

Amongst the anecdotes about our Shaikh's life it is authenticated that when Shaikh Bu Sa'īd met Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq¹⁴⁷, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, one day they were seated together and our Shaikh asked Ostād Bu 'Ali: "Oh Ostād, can this mystic state be permanent?"

Ostād said no.

Our Shaikh lowered his head. After a while he raised his head and once more asked: "Oh Ostād, can this mystic state be permanent?"

Ostād said no.

The Shaikh lowered his head again. When some time had gone by, our Shaikh raised his head and asked: "Oh Ostād, can this mystic state be permanent?"

Ostād Bu 'Ali said: "If so, it's very rare!"

Our Shaikh clapped his hands together and went on repeating: "This is one of those rare cases!"

* * *

Even after our Shaikh had reached maturity, there were times when he experienced a state of spiritual contraction. This was not because of veils descending but rather because of the contraction inherent in human nature.

The Shaikh would then call anyone at all and ask him to say something, in the hope that the person's words would bring on a state of spiritual expansion.

It has been related that one day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in a state of contraction. He called different persons and asked them to talk but a state of expansion did not occur. He ordered his servant: "Go outside through this door and bring before me whomever you meet."

The servant went outside. Someone passed by and the servant said to him: "The Shaikh wishes to see you."

The man came in and greeted our Shaikh with "salaam". Our Shaikh said: "Talk to me about something."

He said: "Oh Shaikh, anything I have to say is not worthy of the Shaikh's blessed ears. I know nothing which I could tell you."

Our Shaikh said: "Tell me anything at all that occurs to you."

The man replied: "I'll tell you a story about myself."

One time the thought occurred to me that Shaikh Bu Sa'id is only a human being like the rest of us. The unveiling and spiritual state which he has achieved, is the result of self-mortification and devotional practices. Now I'll turn to devotional acts and austerities and I, too, will attain the same mystical state and 'moment'.

For a certain time I performed religious devotions, along with various forms of austerities and self-mortification. Then in my fantasy I was convinced that I had reached such a station and that my prayers would have to be answered and could not possibly be rejected.

I thought to myself that I would request God, *He is sublime and exalted*, to transform rocks into gold for me. Then I would live in comfort for the rest of my life and all my desires and goals would be attained.

So, having gone and gathered a quantity of rocks, I piled them in a corner of the room where I'd been performing my devotions. Having chosen a holy night, I performed a major ritual ablution

and prayed all through the night. When dawn came, the time that prayers are answered, I raised my hands and with the sincerest faith and certainty said: 'Oh Lord, change these rocks into gold!'

When I had repeated these words several times, I heard a voice come forth from a corner of the room: 'Take a big crap in his face!'"¹⁴⁸

When the man said these words, a state of expansion immediately came over our Shaikh and he experienced a flush of joy. The Shaikh rose to his feet and started to dance, all the while repeating: "Take a big crap in his face!"

Thus, a state of joy emerged and the previous state of contraction was transformed into spiritual expansion.¹⁴⁹

* * *

Whenever the Shaikh's state of contraction became extreme, he would set out to visit the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan¹⁵⁰ in Saraks. K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher, our Shaikh's son, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One day our Shaikh was speaking before an assembly and that day he was in a state of contraction. In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh broke out in tears and the whole group began to weep. The Shaikh said: 'Whenever a state of contraction comes over me, I resort to the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan in order to change my state to one of expansion. Saddle my horse!'

The Shaikh's horse was brought and the Shaikh mounted up and the whole group set off with him. Once they were out in the countryside, the Shaikh became cheerful and the character of his mood changed. He began to talk and all at once the group raised a cry and shouted out.

When they arrived at Saraks, the Shaikh went straight from the road to the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan and asked the reciter to sing the verses:

'This mine of noble generosity
Is a mine of happiness and gaiety.
While others pray toward Mecca's sanctuary,
We turn in prayer toward the beloved's face.'

The reciter went on chanting these verses. Meanwhile, they held the Shaikh's hand and the Shaikh performed a circumambula-

tion around the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Fazl, all the while crying out. And the darvishes, barefoot and with bare heads, rolled about on the ground.

When calm had re-established itself, our Shaikh said: 'Make a date for this day, for you shall never again see a day like this.'

Thereafter, every one of our Shaikh's disciples who pledged himself to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Shaikh would send to the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Fazl, saying: 'Make a pilgrimage to this tomb and circumambulate the tomb seven times in order to acquit yourself of your pledge¹⁵¹.'

* * *

With reference to the period when our Shaikh had finished practicing ascetic austerities and his spiritual state and unveiling had reached completion, the Shaikh's companions have related:

"The Shaikh never neglected a single devotional act, nor a single custom from the rules of good behavior, as practiced by Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him* -- and this whether the Shaikh was traveling or at home.

Moreover, he was totally occupied with religious practices, such that even when he was asleep, from deep within his throat came forth the words: 'Allah, Allah, Allah!'"

* * *

Men at large were rarely aware of our Shaikh's ascetic practices and self-mortification -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* The Shaikh kept this state of affairs hidden from people and didn't speak of it or allow it to be made public. Mention of it would only pass his blessed lips during an assembly by way of citing evidence or when conversing, for the purpose of giving guidance and encouragement to disciples.

One day during an assembly our Shaikh said: "Everything you must do, I have undertaken myself."

* * *

All the Friends, *God sanctify their souls*, behaved this way. They hid their mystic state and miraculous gifts from men at large. The real situation was only ever revealed without their intending it.

One of the spiritual masters, when something of his miraculous gifts was revealed without his intention, beseeched God, *He is sublime and exalted*: "Oh Lord, now that what exists between You and me has been made known to people, take away my life, for I cannot put up with the burden of people who will distract my attention from You."

Straightway he was transferred to the mercy of God – *He is glorious and exalted!*

However, men like that are not the guides of our spiritual community. Those who are guides make no effort to display their miraculous gifts but should their gifts be made public without their intention, they are not disturbed by this, since the burden of the people does not act as a veil for them. On the contrary, they have been appointed to preach to the people and to offer disciples right instruction, guidance and moral improvement. These guides are the more experienced of the two groups.

There are many stations along the mystic path. The shaikhs of the mystic community have designated one thousand and one. An account of them would prove to be of great length. My purpose has been to affirm that the shaikhs have not sought to make a display of their miraculous gifts but have, in fact, endeavored to keep them hidden and concealed.

One difference between a Friend and a prophet is that the prophets have been instructed to display miracles, whereas the Friends are required to keep them hidden.

Consequently, in view of these principles, the Shaikh's ascetic disciplines, self-mortification and miraculous gifts, for the most part, remained hidden from public view and no one had knowledge of them.

An extreme effort has been made to verify whatever was reported to me by trustworthy and honest men. Only then has it been presented. What went on, however, in private between God and the Shaikh cannot be told in this account.

* * *

Our Shaikh lived one thousand months which amounts to eighty-three years and four months. On Thursday at midday, the 4th of Ša'bān, in the year 440¹⁵² the Shaikh died in Meyhana in his cell of seclusion which is located in his house. Friday, at mid-morning, he was buried in the sanctified sepulchral shrine opposite his house, the very place he had himself indicated.

Book One

May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, not cut short in our midst and among all mankind the blessings from the Shaikh's high aspiration¹⁵³ and utterances, and may He make our footsteps and those of all men straight and steady in following the Shaikh's example -- *for the sake of Moḥammad and Moḥammad's family, one and all!*

BOOK TWO

ON THE MIDDLE PERIOD OF OUR SHAIKH'S LIFE, GOD SANCTIFY HIS AWESOME SOUL, AND THIS CONSISTS OF THREE CHAPTERS:

CHAPTER ONE

ACCOUNTS OF OUR SHAIKH'S MIRACLES, GOD SANCTIFY HIS AWESOME SOUL, AND THEY ARE WELL-KNOWN AND HAVE BEEN AUTHENTICATED.

* * *

When our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was no longer occupied with austerities and self-mortification and had returned to Meyhana, his mystic vision had reached its full degree of perfection. It was then that he set out for Nishapur¹.

When the Shaikh reached the village of Bāz-e ʿTus, which lies two *farsangs*² from the city of ʿTābarān³, he sent a darvish on ahead, saying: "It is necessary that you go to the city to see Ma'ṣuq⁴ and ask him: 'Do we have permission to enter your spiritual domain⁵?'"

.....

Our Shaikh never said to anyone: "Do this, or do that!"

Rather he would say: "It is necessary to do this, or one should not do that."

.....

This Ma'ṣuq was one of the wise madmen. He was a man of eminence and endowed with a perfect mystic state. Ma'ṣuq resided in the city of ʿTus, where his tomb is to be found today.

.....

As soon as the darvish set off, the Shaikh ordered his horse to be saddled and followed after him with the group of Sufis. One *farsang* from ʿTus, the Shaikh's horse halted of its own accord, and the Shaikh's companions halted as well. The spot they stopped at is

known as the Two Brothers, twin hills from the top of which the city is visible.

When the darvish came before Ma'sūq and delivered the Shaikh's message, Ma'sūq smiled and said: "Go tell him to enter!"

The moment Ma'sūq uttered these words in the city, the Shaikh drove his horse forward, and he and his company rode on until the darvish met up with the Shaikh on the road and reported Ma'sūq's reply.

Upon arriving, the Shaikh went straight to see Ma'sūq and Ma'sūq came out to welcome our Shaikh and embraced him.

Ma'sūq said: "Oh Shaikh, be content! The music of pomp and rank that they play here and in other places, shall soon be brought to your royal court."⁶

Then the Shaikh took leave of Ma'sūq and went to stay in Ostād Bu Aḥmad's *kānaqāh* which had formerly been blessed by the footsteps of Shaikh Bu Naṣr-e Sarraj⁷.

Bu Aḥmad received our Shaikh with many tokens of respect and kept him in Ṭus for several days and arranged for the Shaikh to give a public discourse in the *kānaqāh*. When the people of Ṭus heard the Shaikh's words and beheld his manifest miraculous powers, with one accord they all became his devotees. He was received with great acclaim and many were those who became his devotees.

* * *

I heard the following from Amir Imam 'Ezz al-Din Maḥmud b. Ilbāṣi, *God have mercy on him*, who said:

"I heard Amir Sayyed Bu 'Ali-ye 'Orzi say:

'When our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Ṭus and spoke before an assembly in the *kānaqāh* of Ostād Bu Aḥmad, I was a young boy and attended the discourse with my father. A great number of people had gathered and there was not even any room by the door or on the roof.

During the Shaikh's discourse, when everyone in the audience was weeping, a baby, due to the crowd of women, slipped from its mother's embrace and fell from the roof⁸.

Our Shaikh caught sight of the child and said: "Catch it!"

In the midst of the air, a pair of hands appeared and, catching up the child, placed it on the ground.

Thus, the child came to no harm. Everyone present at the assembly witnessed this event. Shouting arose from the crowd and people entered states of ecstasy.'

And Sayyed Bu 'Ali swore an oath to the effect that: 'I saw this with my own eyes. If this is not the way it was and I did not see it with my own eyes, may I go blind in both my eyes!'"

* * *

Kamāl al-Din Bu Sa'id, my paternal uncle, has related:

"I went to Saraks in the company of my father, Kvāja Bu Sa'd, and my grandfather, Kvāja Bu Tāher, *God have mercy on them*, in order to visit Neẓām al-Molk⁹ – *God have mercy on him!* He told us the following:

'When Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Ṭus, I was a child. I was standing with several other children in the Street of the Christians and the Shaikh appeared with a large group of companions. When the Shaikh was close to us, he turned to his companions and said: "Whoever wishes to behold the leader of the world, there he is! He's standing over there!"

And the Shaikh pointed towards us. We looked at one another in amazement, wondering which of us he meant. We were only children at the time and didn't understand. That was forty years ago. Today it is clear he was referring to me."

* * *

Kvāja Bu'l-Qāsem-e Hāšemi has recounted:

"I was seventeen years old when Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Ṭus. My father was the headman of Ṭus and a devotee of the Shaikh – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* Every day he attended the Shaikh's assembly at the kānaqāh of Ostād Bu Aḥmad and brought me along with him as well. And I would remain standing in my father's presence.

Like other young men, I was in love with a girl. One evening the girl sent me a message, saying: 'I am to go to a wedding. Take care that on my way back I can see you.'¹⁰

I sat down on the roof and as the night drew on, I grew sleepy. To keep from falling asleep I recited these verses to myself in a whisper:

'My eyes are filled with tears and know no sleep.
I am so anxious to behold you. Friends say:
Sleep and you shall see her in your dreams.
Oh fools, what hope of sleep is there for me?'

Although I kept repeating these lines of verse, sleep stole over me and I didn't wake up again until the muezzin sounded the call to morning prayers. Because of remaining asleep, I hadn't caught sight of anyone.

The following day I attended the Shaikh's assembly, and I stood to the rear of my father. The Shaikh was asked about love and the path of God and he was discoursing on this subject to the effect that:

'On the path of pursuing a human beloved, look what hardship and effort you undertake, without even being sure of attaining your goal. Now, if the bondsman¹¹ hasn't traveled the path of God, how can he attain the goal?

Why, look here! Last night "a goal" had a rendezvous with this young man. He stayed awake through half the night and was reciting:

"My eyes are filled with tears and know no sleep."

And what comes after that, young man?

I didn't say a word. The Shaikh called out: 'K^vāja Bu'l-Qāsem!'

I felt like I was dying. The Shaikh called out once more. I fell down and lost consciousness.

When I came to again, the Shaikh said: 'If your eyes were filled with tears and knew no sleep, why did you go to sleep and miss attaining the goal?'

And then the Shaikh recited the other lines of verse.

With one accord the crowd let out shouts. Again I fell unconscious and lost my self-control.

The Shaikh said to me: 'That's enough now.'

People entered states of ecstasy and robes were thrown off. My father bought back these robes in exchange for a banquet.¹²

Later when the Shaikh came to our house, my father requested of him: 'If you drink some water, drink from the hand of Bu'l-Qāsem.'

I stood behind the Shaikh with a pitcher of water, and the Shaikh twice drank from my hand.

Book Two, Chapter One

And the Shaikh said to me: 'You shall be a man of virtue.'

During the eighty-one years of my life, out of respect for the Shaikh's words, I have never committed a forbidden act. I have never drunk wine and I have not rendered service to any mortal creature, nor done anything bad to anyone.

I myself was the person affected in these two miracles of the Shaikh."

* * *

It is related how one day in Tus our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and Shaikh Abu'l-Qāsem of Korrakān¹³, *God have mercy on him*, were sitting together on a raised platform. Standing in front of them was a group of darvishes.

In the heart of one of the darvishes the thought occurred: "I wonder what the spiritual rank of these two eminent men is?"

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id immediately turned to the darvish and said: "Whoever wishes to behold two kings together in one place and at one time, on one throne and with one heart -- tell him to look at us!"

When the darvish heard these words, he looked at the two great men. *God, He is sublime and exalted*, lifted the veil from the eye of his heart so that the truth of the Shaikh's words was made manifest in the darvish's heart and he recognized their greatness.

The darvish thought: "I wonder whether *God, He is sanctified and exalted*, has any bondsman on earth who is greater than these two persons?"

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id immediately turned to the darvish and said: "It would be a small dominion in which every day seventy thousand like Bu Sa'id and Bu'l-Qāsem didn't appear, and seventy thousand would still not be enough!"¹⁴

When the Shaikh said this, he smiled.

* * *

When Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had spent some days in Tus, he set out for Nishapur.

K^vāja Maḥmud-e Morid resided in Nishapur and he was a man of great distinction and a servitor of the Sufis, such that after our Shaikh had come to Nishapur and met him, he used to send devo-

tees to Maḥmud-e Morid and would say: "Maḥmud is a good guide."

One morning, after performing the morning prayers, Maḥmud-e Morid said: "Last night I had a dream and beheld the mountain that faces Ṭus, split in half. A moon rose out of the mountain's two parts and came down to earth at 'Adani Kuyān¹⁵ Street. Oh companions, Shaikh Bu Sa'īd is coming! Give the call to go forth to welcome him."

Maḥmud-e Morid and his group made haste to go forth into the countryside to meet our Shaikh. Meanwhile, the Shaikh with a large group of followers, was approaching. When they met one another, the Shaikh got down from his horse and embraced K^vāja Maḥmud and his followers and asked after their well-being. Then he mounted up and entered the city.

K^vāja Maḥmud said to his group: "Since I dreamt that the moon came down to earth at 'Adani Kuyān Street, let us put the Shaikh up there."

And the Shaikh was given accommodation on 'Adani Kuyān Street in the *kānaqāh* of Bu 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi¹⁶.

Then K^vāja Maḥmud said: "It will take too long to prepare a meal ourselves. Now let's send to the bazaar for a roasted sheep's head."

The roasted sheep's head was brought and the table-cloth was spread out and the sheep's head was placed in front of the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "May it prove a blessing! I am beginning all over again¹⁷."

When they were finished eating, K^vāja Maḥmud-e Morid asked: "Oh Shaikh, what do you say to going to the bath?"

The Shaikh replied: "A visit to the bath is necessary."

The Shaikh and the group of darvishes went to the bathhouse. When they had spread out the Shaikh's prayer-mat, the bath attendant brought the Shaikh the cleanest loincloth.

But K^vāja Maḥmud quickly undid the turban he was wearing, kissed it and presented it to the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "May it prove a blessing! Since Maḥmud¹⁸ has removed his hat, the others have no importance."

And he took the turban cloth and wrapping it around his waist, entered the bath.

.....

That day when they came forth from the bath, they rested. The next day, however, an assembly was arranged for the Shaikh in the *kānaqāh* of 'Adani Kuyān Street. At the beginning of the assembly, the Shaikh was questioned in the following manner: "Here in Nishapur there is a man of eminence by the name of Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri¹⁹, and he says: 'The servant may reach God with two steps.'

What does the Shaikh say on this point?"

The Shaikh replied: "Not so! I²⁰ say the servant reaches God with one step."

The disciples of Ostād Imam went before their master and reported what the Shaikh had said. Ostād Imam said: "Did you not ask how that is possible?"

The next day they put the question to the Shaikh: "Yesterday did you not say a man may reach God with one step?"

The Shaikh replied: "Yes, and I say the same today and will say the same until the resurrection."

They asked: "How is that, oh Shaikh?"

He answered: "Between the servant and God there is only one step, and that consists of taking one step outside the Self in order to reach God. All in all there is no need for your existence!"

When the Shaikh said these words, a street vendor cried out at the *kānaqāh* door: "*Kamā*²¹ and every one a fine delicacy!"

The Shaikh exclaimed: "Hark to the words of this unaware fellow and do as he says. Be diminished, for then you shall be all!"

Then the Shaikh recited:

"Concordance, sweet temperament, no bile.
Let the love between us be without a twist."

The disciples returned before Ostād Imam and related these words to him. Ostād declared: "It is as the Shaikh says."

.....

Meanwhile, the Shaikh spoke before an assembly every day, and whenever a thought passed through someone's heart, the Shaikh, in the midst of his discourse, would turn to the person and make a reply to whatever was in the person's heart²² -- by means of an allusion, or verses, or an anecdote -- in such a way that the particular person understood.

Thus, all the people of Nishapur turned towards the Shaikh and accorded him their acclaim.

However, while discoursing, the Shaikh recited poetry and verses, and he gave lavish banquets and the *samā*²³ was constantly performed in his presence. And so, all the imams of the religious sects disapproved of the Shaikh.

* * *

KṢāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"The Shaikh's fame spread throughout Nishapur. It was said that a Sufi *pir* had come from Meyhana and was speaking before assemblies on 'Adani Kuyān Street. And he was capable of revealing the secrets of God's servants²⁴ -- *He is exalted!* I was very hostile to the Sufis. I said:

'A Sufi has no religious learning²⁵. How can he speak before an assembly? And God, *He is sublime and exalted*, didn't give knowledge of the Unseen to any prophet, or to anyone else, nor will He ever do so. So how can he be able to reveal the secrets of the servants of God -- *He is sublime and exalted!*'

One day, to test him, I attended the Shaikh's assembly and sat just in front of his platform. I was wearing sumptuous clothes and had bound round my head a Ṭabarestān²⁶ turban. And my heart was full of disapproval and hostility.

The Shaikh spoke before the assembly and when he brought the assembly to a close, asked for clothing on behalf of a poor man. Each person present gave something. Then he asked for a turban. It occurred to me to give my own turban but I said to myself: 'This turban was brought to me as a gift from Āmol and is worth ten Nishapuri dinars. I will not give it.'

Once more the Shaikh asked for a turban and again it occurred in my heart: 'I should give this turban.'

I considered it again for some time but my previous thought entered my heart.

There was an old man sitting alongside me and he asked: 'Oh Shaikh, does God, *He is sublime and exalted*, ever speak to His servant?'

The Shaikh replied: 'He will not ask more than twice for a turban from Ṭabarestān. He has asked the man sitting by your side two times: "Give the turban you are wearing to this poor man!"'

Book Two, Chapter One

But he is thinking to himself: "I will not give it away. It is worth ten dinars and was brought to me as a gift from Āmol.""

Hasan-e Mo'addeb goes on to relate:

"When I heard these words, I began to tremble. I stood up and coming before the Shaikh, I kissed his feet. Not only did I give away the turban, but I gave all my clothes to that poor man.

My heart was emptied of all disapproval and hostility. I became a Muslim anew. Whatever goods and wealth I had, I sacrificed for the sake of the Shaikh and I devoted myself permanently to the Shaikh's service."

.....

Hasan-e Mo'addeb was our Shaikh's personal servant. For the rest of his life he remained in the Shaikh's service. His tomb is located in Meyhana. *God have mercy on him!*

* * *

I heard the following story from the custodian of the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street in Nishapur, Pir Moḥammad-e Šowkāni and from his brother, Zeyn al-Ṭāyefa 'Omar-e Šowkāni. And they both said they had heard it from their father.

Their father has related:

"I was a young man when the sons of Shaikh Abu Sa'id -- *God sanctify his awesome soul and bestow ample mercy on his sons* -- sent me from Meyhana to serve in the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* in Nishapur. I had been engaged in waiting upon the darvishes for some time. One day I went into the bathhouse that stood alongside the *kānaqāh*, the bathhouse which the Shaikh had often frequented.

When I sat down and had my head shaved, an old man came up to me. He wanted to do me a service and rub my back and give me a massage. I would not let him, saying: 'You are an old man of distinction and I am young. It is my duty to be of service to you.'

He said: 'Allow me to massage you and I will tell you a story.'

I consented and the old man, while rubbing my back, related the following:

'When I was a young man, I had a sweets shop in the marketplace of Nishapur. Having plied this trade for some time and accumulated a sizeable capital, I felt the desire to traffic merchandise. I left my shop and sold what had to be sold and bought goods

suitable for Bokhara. And I had never been to a village more than five *farsangs*²⁷ from the city, or ever gone on a journey.

A large caravan was leaving for Bokhara. I hired a camel as well and departed with them. We arrived at Saraks and after stopping there a few days for a rest, we set out for Marv.

Every night, as was the practice of those on foot, I'd walk ahead of the caravan for some distance and go to sleep until it caught up. Then I'd get up and walk along with the caravan again.

One night I was walking ahead in this manner. It had grown late and I was very tired. Sleep was about to overcome me. I hurried on a bit further and then went off to one side of the road and lay down to sleep. I slept soundly. Meanwhile the caravan arrived and left and I went on sleeping until the heat of day woke me.

When I rose to my feet, I didn't see a sign of the caravan anywhere. There was only sand and I couldn't see the road. For a while I ran about in circles. I lost the way. I was like a man out of his wits. I ran in every direction hoping to find the road but I only became more confused. Then I thought to myself:

"I can't go on like this, running now one way, now another. I'll never reach anywhere. The wise thing for me to do is to make an effort to collect myself and to think. I'll head in whatever direction my judgement decides on. In the end I'll come to a settlement or reach a road and find someone I can ask about the way. Then I'll set off after the caravan and catch up with them."

I resolved upon this plan and chose one direction and went on walking until nightfall. The heat was unbearable and I was extremely thirsty and hungry. When it grew cooler, I felt a bit stronger. I thought to myself it would be better to walk at night than during the day in the heat. All that night I pressed on until morning.

With the first light, I looked around me and saw a landscape of sand, thorns, scrub and brushwood. Nowhere did I see a sign of an inhabited place, or water, or a living creature. I felt defeated. Despite thirst, hunger and fatigue, I walked on until the sun became hot and my thirst reached the point where I no longer had the strength to move. I fell to the ground and gave myself up to death.

But then I thought:

"All that counts in a situation like this is effort. I mustn't resign myself to death until I've made every effort. I have one remedy left. I'll climb to the top of the highest dune I can find, and look out over the surrounding land. Maybe I'll sight an inhabited place,

Book Two, Chapter One

or some water, or an Arab or Torkomān²⁸ dwelling. If so, I've attained my wish! If not, I'll dig a hole on top of that sand hill and gather scrub around it, so that once I'm dead no rapacious animal will eat me. Then I'll surrender and give myself over to death."

I looked about and saw a large hill. I exerted myself and having climbed it with great difficulty, gazed out over the desert. In the distance a dark spot met my eye. I looked harder. It was a patch of greenery. At that my heart took courage and I thought: "Where there is vegetation, there is water, and where there is water, there may well be people!"

Thus, my strength revived. I came down from the hill and set off in the direction of the greenery. When I got there, I saw that the spot consisted of a patch of hard ground in the middle of the sands (an arrow shot in breadth), where a spring of pure water was gushing up and flowing away on all sides. Wherever the water reached, it was green with thriving plants.

I drew near and drank from the spring, performed ritual ablutions, offered up two *rak'ats*²⁹ of prayer and prostrated myself in thanks to almighty God, *He is sublime and exalted*, for having restored my life. Then I said to myself:

"I must remain here. I can't leave this spot. Maybe someone will come to the spring for water. If no one comes, I'll stay here one day and night and rest before setting out. At least here I have water."

I ate a few plant roots and moving off from the spring, climbed to the top of a dune. I placed some dry scrub around me so no one could see me. From out of the scrub I looked forth in all directions. I thought: "I don't want a wild animal or some impious person -- if they come here for water -- to give me cause to fear for my life."

So there I lay concealed under the scrub, watching over the desert in all directions until the sun began to decline.

Soon after midday, a black dot appeared far off in the desert. It was heading for the spring, and when it came closer, I could see it was a man.

I said to myself: "*Allah is great!* Behold the door of my salvation!"

When he had come close, I saw he was a tall man, of fair complexion, corpulent, and with large eyes. His beard descended to his waist and he wore the patched frock of a Sufi. He carried a walking stick and a water jug in his hand. His prayer-mat rested across his shoulder and his hat was the kind Sufis wear, while his

feet were clad in cloth sandals. Light shone forth from his countenance.

He came to the edge of the spring and spread out his prayer-mat the way the Sufis do it. He scooped up water in his water jug and went off behind a dune to cleanse himself after easing nature³⁰. When he returned, he sat at the edge of the spring and performed a Sufi ritual ablution. Next, he performed two *rak'ats* of prayer, combed out his beard and raised the call to prayer. He recited the prayer of custom, pronounced the *qāmat* and performed the prayers of obligation³¹. Then, rising to his feet, he placed his prayer-mat over his shoulder and took his walking stick and water jug and headed back into the desert.

While he was still within my view, I was unconscious of myself because of his awe inspiring appearance and my absorption in watching him and the perfection of his devotions. But as soon as he was out of sight, I came back to my senses and reproached myself with:

"What have I done! I've been looking everywhere for someone to save me and show me a way out of this fatal desert. Here I have found a man who's a Sufi, living a pure life, and virtuous -- through the life and prayers of such men the world endures and, through them, all mankind receives guidance and seeks the straight path -- and I was so negligent that he's gone off!"

I reproached myself in this manner at great length. But knowing that this was of no use, I said to myself:

"Now there's nothing to do but be patient. Maybe he'll return, even this very day, or this evening, or tomorrow. Only through him can I find deliverance."

And so I waited -- until it was the beginning of the hour of afternoon prayers. The same black dot appeared in the distance and I knew it was the same person. When he drew near, indeed it was he.

As previously, he spread out his prayer-rug and repeated his ablutions. Having performed two *rak'ats* of prayer and raised the call to prayer, he recited what is custom, pronounced the *qāmat*, and then undertook the prayers of obligation.

But this time I was more bold. I slowly crept forth from the scrub, descended the hill and sat down behind him. When he had finished the prayers and raised up his hands and pronounced an invocation to God, he then got up to go.

I clasped the hem of his robe and said:

"Oh Shaikh, help me, for the sake of Allah! I am a man from Nishapur. I was traveling with a caravan to Bokhara to sell goods, but I lost my way and have wandered in the desert for two whole days now. The caravan has gone and I don't know the road."

He lowered his head for a moment. When he looked up, he took hold of my hand and I saw a lion appear from out of the desert. The lion came before him, made obeisance and then stood there in attendance. He put his mouth to the lion's ear and whispered something. Then he sat me on the lion and, fixing my hands on the animal's mane, said to me:

"Grip the lion's belly firmly with your legs and close your eyes and keep them closed and hold on tight. When it stops, dismount and walk in whatever direction it's facing."

I hadn't closed my eyes when the lion set off. After a while the lion came to a standstill. I jumped to the ground and opened my eyes. The lion left and I saw a road in front of me. I walked a certain way along the road and there I saw my caravan which had halted for a rest. I was filled with joy and they were happy as well. And so I went on with them to Bokhara.

I made a good profit from the merchandise I'd brought with me and I bought other goods suitable to sell in Nishapur. Then I returned to Nishapur, experienced great relief, and once again sat in my shop and plied the confectioner's trade.

Several years went by and then one day I happened to go to 'Adani Kuyān Street on some errand. I saw a crowd at the entrance to the *kānaqāh* and I asked what was going on. I was told:

"A man by the name of Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-*Keyr* has come from Meyhana. He is a *pir* and leader of the Sufis. He has manifest miraculous powers and is residing in this *kānaqāh*. Today he is going to speak before an assembly. All these people are eager to attend his assembly. That's why there's such a crowd."

I said to myself: "I'll go in as well and see what sort of man he is."

I entered the *kānaqāh* and stood by one of the columns at the side of the porch. The Shaikh, seated on a raised platform, had already begun his discourse, and when I looked at him, I beheld the man who'd sat me on the lion in the desert. He had his face turned away from me while he was speaking. When I recognized him, he turned to me and said: "Ho! (verse):

Haven't you heard: 'Whatever men behold
In the wilderness, they don't divulge in the city.'?"

When the Shaikh uttered these words, I raised a cry and fell to the ground unconscious. Meanwhile, the Shaikh carried on with his discourse. By the time I came to again, the Shaikh had brought the assembly to a close and the public had gone. Only one darvish remained, and he was holding my head on his lap.

When I came to, I rose to my feet and the darvish said: "The Shaikh wants you to come to see him."

I went before the Shaikh and fell down and kissed his feet. The Shaikh showed me great consideration and gave me one of his own beneficent souvenirs. Then he told Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to bring me new clothes³² and had my confectioner's robe removed and dressed me in the other clothes.

Next, the Shaikh placed a tray full of sugar inside the sleeve of my robe, saying: "Take this to give to your children, and promise me that as long as I am alive, you will not tell this story to anyone."

I gave the Shaikh my word and while he was alive, I did not tell anyone this story. But now that the Shaikh has departed for the Eternal Abode, I have told the story to you."

* * *

KVāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, the Shaikh's personal servant, has related:

"When our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, first came to Nishapur and began speaking before assemblies, the people at large all turned to him and many devotees appeared who bestowed their wealth upon him.

At that time, Ostād Abu Bakr-e Eshāq-e Karrāmi³³ was the leader of the Karrāmi sect in Nishapur, and Qāzi Šā'ed³⁴ was the chief of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence and the Shiites. Both these men had many followers and disapproved of our Shaikh vehemently and were hostile to all Sufis.

Our Shaikh constantly recited verses from the pulpit and gave lavish banquets, such that on each occasion one thousand dinars or more might be spent, and he constantly practiced the *samā*³⁵. And these religious leaders greatly disapproved of this behavior. The Shaikh, however, paid them no heed but carried on as always.

Finally, they sat together and drew up an attestation. The imams of the Karrāmi sect and the Ḥanafī school wrote the following:

'A man has come here from Meyhana who claims to be a Sufi and speaks before assemblies. He recites poetry from the pulpit. He does not quote Qor'ānic commentary or the Traditions of the Prophet.

He constantly gives sumptuous banquets and orders the *samā'* to be performed. The young men dance and eat almond candies and roast chicken and he says: "I am an ascetic."

This is not the behavior of ascetics, nor the distinctive sign of Sufis.

With one accord the people of Nishapur have turned to him and are being led astray. The greater part of the common people has fallen into disorder. If preventative measures are not taken, general sedition will soon break out.'

This attestation was sent before the sultan in Ġaznin³⁶. An answer was written on the back of the same document to the effect that: 'Let the imams of the two schools of religious law, that of Šāfe'i and that of Abu Ḥanifa, sit and examine this case and punish him in accordance with the precepts of Divine Law.'

The sultan's edict arrived on a Thursday. The Shaikh's detractors were very pleased indeed. They sat together and said: 'Tomorrow is Friday. Saturday let us hold an assembly. Then we shall set up the gallows in the marketplace and hang the Shaikh along with all the other Sufis.'

They all agreed to this and reports of their intentions spread throughout the city. Those who believed in Sufism, were distressed and the Sufis were grief stricken but none of them was bold enough to inform the Shaikh about this matter. However, there was no need to tell the Shaikh about any event, since, through his clairvoyance and miraculous powers, he saw whatever happened and knew about it."

Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb goes on to relate:

"That day, after we had performed the afternoon prayers, the Shaikh called me before him and asked: 'Oh Ḥasan, how many Sufis are there here now?'

I replied: 'One hundred and twenty: eighty travelers and forty residents.'

The Shaikh asked: 'And what will you serve them tomorrow for the midmorning meal?'

I answered: 'Whatever the Shaikh instructs me.'

The Shaikh said: 'Tomorrow place before each person the head of a tender lamb and serve a large amount of pounded sugar to sprinkle over the brain. Each person is also to receive a *rat*³⁷ of

caliph's halva made with sugar, and rose water and incense. Provide a lot of rose water and incense, for I intend to burn incense and sprinkle them with rose water. Then, see that there are freshly laundered table-cloths.

And serve up this feast in the Friday mosque so that those who slander us behind our back, may see with their own eyes the way God, *He is sublime and exalted*, from behind the veil of the Unseen, regales those dear to the Royal Court of His splendor!"

Ḥasan goes on to relate:

"When the Shaikh gave me these instructions, in the whole storehouse and the *kānaqāh* there was not so much as one piece of bread in the way of 'means'³⁸ and I didn't know anyone throughout Nishapur whom I dared to ask for a single dirhem, since by now everyone was upset because of the rumor that was going round. Nor did I have the courage to ask the Shaikh how I was to pay for this. Thus, I left the Shaikh's presence and went outside.

The sun was declining. I stood on the corner of 'Adani Kuyān Street in a state of perplexity. I had no idea what to do. It grew late and the sun was on the point of setting. People were closing their shops and heading home. Then the hour of evening prayers arrived and it grew dark.

A man came running from the far end of the bazaar, in a hurry to get home since it was evening. He saw me standing there and said: 'Oh Ḥasan, why are you standing there at this late hour, looking so perplexed?'

I told him the whole story -- what the Shaikh had instructed me and the present situation and that there was no "wherewithal". And I added: 'If necessary, I will stand here until dawn. I cannot possibly return to the *kānaqāh*.'

The young man opened his sleeve and said: 'Put your hand in my sleeve³⁹. Take as much as you need and spend it on what the Shaikh ordered.'

I reached into his sleeve and brought forth a filled palm. I looked and it was gold. I departed in joy and set about my task. Everything the Shaikh had ordered, I arranged and it was as if my palm had been a scale and weighed out just enough to pay for everything the Shaikh mentioned.

Early the following morning, I went and fetched the tablecloths and set out all the foods which the Shaikh had indicated, inside the Friday mosque. Then the Shaikh came to the mosque with the company of Sufis and many people stood over them to watch. And news was brought to Qāzi Ṣā'ed and Ostād Abu Bakr-e Eshāq-

e Karrāmi that the Shaikh had arranged a splendid banquet for the Sufis in the Friday mosque.

Qāzi Şā'ed said: 'Let them make merry today, eating their roast sheep's heads. Tomorrow the crows will feast on their heads!'

And Abu Bakr-e Eshāq said: 'Let them grease their bellies today, for tomorrow their own fat will grease the gallows!'

These remarks were conveyed to the Sufis who were greatly grieved and distressed.

When they were finished dining and had washed their hands, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Ḥasan, take the Sufis' prayer-rugs into the *maqşura*⁴⁰ behind Qāzi Şā'ed. Today I will perform my prayers behind him since I feel a desire for him.'

.....

And Qāzi Şā'ed was the head preacher of the city.

.....

Ḥasan continues:

"I brought all the prayer-rugs into the *maqşura* behind Qāzi Şā'ed. I arranged the one hundred and twenty rugs in two rows, with the result that there was no room left for anyone else.

Qāzi Şā'ed came in, mounted the pulpit and delivered a sermon full of disapproval. Then he came down from the pulpit and performed the prayers.

When he pronounced the 'salaam', the Shaikh rose to his feet and didn't wait for the prayer of custom⁴¹ but started to leave. As the Shaikh was leaving, Qāzi Şā'ed turned around. The Shaikh looked askance⁴² at Qāzi Şā'ed and the *qāzi* immediately lowered his head. Thus, the Shaikh, accompanied by his followers, departed.

When we were back at the *kānaqāh*, the Shaikh said to me:

'Oh Ḥasan, go to the Marketplace of the Kermānis. You will find a few cake shops there which have fine cakes on display -- with white sesame seeds and pistachios sprinkled on them. Buy ten maunds⁴³ of these cakes. Then walk on a bit further and you will come to a shop that sells seedless raisins. Buy ten maunds of raisins. After washing them, wrap them in two pieces of white *fuṭa* cloth⁴⁴. Lift this onto your head, and bring it to Ostād Abu Bakr-e Eshāq. Tell him to break his fast tonight with this.'

Ḥasan relates:

"I rose to my feet and went to the Marketplace of the Kermānis. There I found things as the Shaikh had described. In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, I bought the cakes and the raisins at those two places and went to Abu Bakr-e Eshāq's house and asked to be admitted. Then I went in, and having delivered my greetings and the greetings of the Shaikh, I said: 'The Shaikh bids you break your fast tonight with this.'

When he saw what it was, his complexion changed color. For a while he stood biting his finger in amazement. Then he had me sit down and said: 'Call my chamberlain, Bu'l-Qāsemak.'

When Bu'l-Qāsemak the chamberlain came, Ostād Abu Bakr ordered him: 'Go to Qāzi Šā'ed and tell him: "I will not be keeping the appointment we made for tomorrow, to dispute with the Shaikh of the Sufis and do him harm. You do what you think is best with him."

If Qāzi Šā'ed asks why, tell him:

"I began a fast last night. Then today when I was on my donkey on my way to the Friday mosque and I came to the Marketplace of the Kermānis, I saw some fine-looking cakes on display in a cake shop. My appetite was aroused. I thought to myself: 'When I return from the prayers, I'll send out to buy some of those cakes. Tonight that's what I'll break my fast with.'

I walked on a bit further and saw some raisins. I said to myself: 'These raisins will go very well with the cakes. I'll buy some of them too.'

When I came home, I forgot all about it. This was only a passing thought which I hadn't mentioned to anyone. No one knew about it.

Just now the Shaikh has sent me both these items that aroused my appetite -- from the same two shops -- and he bids me break my fast with them tonight. I am not up to disputing with someone who has this degree of clairvoyance with regard to what passes through the hearts of God's servants."

The chamberlain Bu'l-Qāsemak went off and delivered the message. When he came back, he announced: 'Qāzi Šā'ed says:

"I was just about to send you a message concerning this urgent matter. Today the Shaikh performed his prayers behind me. When he'd pronounced the 'salaam', he rose to go without saying the prayer of custom. I turned around and was about to reproach with: 'Is this the behavior of ascetics and the distinctive sign of the Sufis, to omit the prayer of custom on Friday!'

Book Two, Chapter One

With this for a pretext I wanted to offend him and pick a quarrel with him.

But the Shaikh looked askance at me and my courage melted. In my imagination he was a hawk and I was a sparrow and that very moment he was about to destroy me. No matter how I tried, I couldn't utter a word.

Today he has shown me his awesomeness and power. I have no business with him. The sultan's decree was addressed to you. You decide what to do with him. I was only following you. You started this."

When the chamberlain Bu'l-Qāsemak delivered this message, Abu Bakr Eshāq looked at me and said:

'Go tell your shaikh that Abu Bakr Eshāq-e Karrāmi with twenty thousand followers and Qāzi Šā'ed with thirty thousand followers and the sultan with one hundred thousand men and seven hundred and fifty war elephants, had drawn up their right and left wings, their center and their flank, and were about to conquer him. But he has broken their ranks and shattered their right and left wings, their center and their flank, with ten maunds of cakes and ten maunds of raisins.

Now let him practice his religion and we shall practice ours, in accordance with:

"You have your religion and I have mine." 45

Hasan relates:

"I went back to the Shaikh and reported what had happened. The Shaikh turned to the disciples and said:

'Since yesterday you have been shaking with fear. You thought you were about to grease the gallows. And yet such a death is for men like Ḥoseyn-e Maṣṣur-e Ḥallāj⁴⁶, and there was no one in his day and age, throughout the East and West, who was his equal in the sciences of the mystic state. It is only with gallant heroes⁴⁷ that they grease the gallows. They do not grease the gallows with cowards!'

Then the Shaikh turned to his singer and said: 'Recite these verses:

Enter the battle field with quiver and shield
But rebel through us, rebel not through the Self.
Though times turn to water or times turn to flame,
You live in gaiety and rejoice all the same.'

While the singers chanted these verses, the disciples raised loud cries and entered states of ecstasy. Eighteen of their number assumed the consecrated state to set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca and robes were thrown off.

.....

The next day Qāzi Šā'ed and his followers came before the Shaikh and offered him their salutations.

Qāzi Šā'ed made apologies and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I have repented and turned away from my former hostility.'

Qāzi Šā'ed was a man of handsome countenance and people called him the Moon of Nishapur.

The Shaikh recited these verses:

'You declared: "I am the Moon of Nishapur."

Oh beauteous Moon, all Nishapur is yours.

What is yours is yours and what is ours is yours.

Only tell us now: Why this hostility?'

When the Shaikh had uttered these lines of verse, Qāzi Šā'ed fell at the Shaikh's feet and begged forgiveness. All those present were cleansed of hostility and left with joyful hearts, and from that day on no one in Nishapur dared speak to the detriment of the Sufis."

* * *

In Nishapur there was a woman named Iši-ye Nili⁴⁸ who was devoted to prayer and ascetic practices. She was from a distinguished family and the people of Nishapur showed her great respect and acquired blessings from her piety and good life. For forty years she had not set foot outside her house, nor gone to the bathhouse. And she had a maidservant who waited upon her.

When our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Nishapur, the report spread through the city that a spiritual master had come from Meyhana who possessed manifest miraculous powers, and he was speaking before assemblies and whenever a secret thought occurred in the mind of someone in the audience, the Shaikh would respond to it.

One day Iši said to her maid: "Rise and go to the Shaikh's assembly and learn some of his sayings so that you can report them to me when you come back."

Book Two, Chapter One

The maidservant attended the Shaikh's assembly but she was not able to retain in her memory or to understand what the Shaikh said in his discourse. The Shaikh recited these lines of verse:

"I had one *dāng* and a half, but a *ḥabba*⁴⁹ short.
Two pitchers of wine I bought, a trifle short.
On my lute the high string and the low are gone.
So don't tell me of the *qalandar's*⁵⁰ life and woes."

When the maid returned, Iṣi asked her what the Shaikh had said. All she could remember were the above verses, which she recited.

Iṣi said: "Go wash out your mouth. What way is that for a religious scholar or an ascetic to have spoken?"

The maidservant went and washed out her mouth.

It was Iṣi's practice to prepare an eye remedy which she gave to people. That night, when Iṣi went to sleep, she had so frightful a dream that she woke up abruptly, and thereupon both her eyes began to pain her.

Despite the remedies she prepared, her eyes didn't get better. She had recourse to all the doctors but found no cure. For twenty days and nights Iṣi cried out loud because of the pain.

One night Iṣi fell asleep and the following came to her in a dream: "If you wish your eyes to get better, go procure the approval of the Shaikh of Meyhana and win his precious heart."

The following day, Iṣi put one thousand Fathī dirhems⁵¹ in a purse and gave it to her maid, saying: "Take this to the Shaikh."

When the Shaikh was finished speaking before the assembly, the maidservant went to him and greeting him with "salaam", placed the silver before him.

It was the Shaikh's custom to have a disciple bring him a piece of dry bread and a toothpick after every public discourse. The Shaikh would consume the bread and then clean his teeth with the toothpick.

When the maidservant put the silver down before the Shaikh, he was cleaning his teeth with the toothpick. She was about to leave but the Shaikh said to her:

"Take this toothpick and tell the lady whose house you serve in, to stir the toothpick in water and bathe her eyes with the water. Her outward sight will then be cured. And tell her to remove from her heart disapproval and hostility towards 'this mystic community', so that her inner sight may also be cured."

The maidservant went and reported the Shaikh's words to Iṣi. Following his instructions, Iṣi soaked the toothpick and bathed her eyes with the water. She was immediately cured.

The next day Iṣi rose and went before the Shaikh with all the jewels, ornaments and clothing she possessed, and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have repented, and I have removed disapproval and hostility from my heart."

The Shaikh said: "May it prove a blessing! Take Iṣi before the mother of Bu Ṭāher, to be dressed in a mystic robe."

And the Shaikh ordered Iṣi: "Choose to wait upon 'this mystic community', so that you may become esteemed in the Two Abodes."

In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, Iṣi went off and put on the mystic robe and occupied herself waiting upon the women of 'this mystic community'.

And whatever she possessed, her house, land, and other things besides, she gave away. Thus, she attained a high rank on this path and became the leader of the Sufis in Nishapur.

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Nishapur and had been in that city a whole year speaking before assemblies and accomplishing spiritual feats. During that time Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, did not meet him, rather his attitude towards the Shaikh was one of disapproval. And during that time, seventy of Ostād Imam's disciples had gone to see our Shaikh and remained in his service. Indeed, whoever attended the Shaikh's assembly and beheld his mystic state and miraculous powers, went over to the Shaikh and remained in his service.

One of this number was Bu Naṣr-e Ḥorzi and he was continually saying to Imam Bu'l-Qāsem: "Why do you not come and see this man and hear his discourse at least once?"

After one year, Ostād Imam consented and said: "Let us go, then, tomorrow!"

The next day at dawn, Ostād Imam, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, rose from bed as usual and went to the lavatory. When he was finished, he took hold of himself with his hand from outside his robe and cleansed himself in the room. And he took a few steps which is religious custom⁵². But taking hold of oneself from outside the robe is not religious custom, for when you put your

Book Two, Chapter One

hand under your skirts, your thigh, which belongs to your private parts⁵³, is exposed. Religious custom requires that the hand remain inside the robe, so that no area of the private parts is exposed -- even when you are all alone. That accords with the well-known, authenticated injunction of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, in which he declares:

"Feel shame before those who see you, though you do not see them."

Then Ostād Imam came forth and woke up the maidservant, saying: "Get up and polish the bridle and the metal trappings of my saddle."

Having said this, Ostād went off to perform his ritual ablutions.

That morning he attended the Shaikh's assembly and the Shaikh began to discourse in his usual manner. Ostād Imam looked and saw what majesty and powers of clairvoyance the Shaikh possessed.

In his heart the thought occurred: "This man is no more learned than I am, and we are on an equal footing when it comes to performing our religious duties. How is it that he has attained this high spiritual station?"

The Shaikh immediately turned to Ostād Imam and, in the middle of his discourse, said:

"Oh Ostād, is 'this affair'⁵⁴ being sought after when the *k^vāja* takes hold of himself contrary to religious custom, walks up and down in the room, and then wakes the maidservant to tell her to get up and polish the bridle and the saddle fittings? That is the moment to make bright the heart, not the bridle and the saddle fittings. 'This affair' is sought when the *k^vāja* occupies himself with this subject⁵⁵."

Ostād Imam was totally confounded. A flush of joy came over him and he went into a swoon.

When the Shaikh came down from the raised platform, he went before Ostād Imam and they embraced one another. All Ostād Imam's disapproval disappeared and after that there was much friendly contact between them.

* * *

It has been related that when Ostād Imam's disapproval of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had disappeared, in his heart Ostād Imam still felt an objection to the *samāʿ* which the Shaikh constantly desired. For, in the beginning, Ostād Imam did not have a firm belief in the *samāʿ*.

One day Ostād Imam passed by the door of our Shaikh's *kānaqāh*. Inside the *kānaqāh* they were engaged in the *samāʿ*. The Sufis were filled with joy and had entered ecstatic states. They were dancing and the Shaikh was dancing along with them.

Ostād Imam looked inside and the thought occurred to him: "According to religious law whoever spins about dancing, shall not be allowed to bear witness in court. He renders his legal status of reliability null and void."

This thought occurred to Ostād and then he left.

The following day, the Shaikh was being escorted to a banquet, and, as it happened, Ostād Imam was going somewhere. They met one another at the crossroads and exchanged greetings.

The Shaikh said: "Oh Ostād, when did you ever see me amongst the ranks of witnesses?"

That is to say, when did you ever see me seated amidst witnesses and see me give testimony?

Ostād Imam knew this was in answer to the thought that had passed through his mind the day before. This objection disappeared from his heart as well.

* * *

It has been related that when Ostād Imam's disapproval of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had disappeared, one day Ostād Imam was passing by the door of the *kānaqāh*. The Shaikh had given the order for the *samāʿ* to take place. The Shaikh himself was in an ecstatic state and the group of disciples were experiencing a higher moment of joy. The reciter was chanting these verses:

"For beauty's sake, there's no blame in being a pagan.
Pagans alone have an idol for their sweetheart."

In his heart Ostād Imam disapproved of these verses. He said to himself:

Book Two, Chapter One

"Even if he can interpret all the other verses in a proper way and find excuses for them, these verses, at least, are such that they will not bear proper interpretation. And the Shaikh is filled with joy listening to them."

Ostad felt this disapproval in his heart but, without objecting openly, he left the *kānaqāh*.

One or two days after that, Ostād Imam came to visit our Shaikh and when they were seated together, the Shaikh looked at Ostād and said: "Oh Ostād,

For beauty's sake, there's no blame in being pagan?
Pagans alone have an idol for their sweetheart?"

By making it into a question, the Shaikh changed the meaning of the words and the sense became: "Aren't you ashamed that for the sake of an idol you've become a pagan? Unless you become a pagan, is it impossible for an idol⁵⁶ to be your beloved?"

Ostād Imam was endowed with wit and learning in such matters, and yet, as much as he'd thought about it, he hadn't been able to find a proper explanation for these verses.

Thus, when he heard the Shaikh's way of interpreting these lines, he admitted that, in the Shaikh's case, the *samā'* was licit and sound. In his heart he repented and vowed that thereafter he would never disapprove of anything the Shaikh did.

And thereafter, every day, either he would visit the Shaikh or the Shaikh would come to visit him.

* * *

Pir Aḥmad was Ostād Imam's personal confidant, *God sanctify both their souls*, and a man of great distinction. He has related:

"One night towards dawn, a son was born to Ostād Imam, and Ostād received news of this event in private. No member of Ostād's *kānaqāh* was as yet informed, and Ostād had not chosen a name for the child. None of his kinsmen and relatives knew of it.

Someone knocked at the *kānaqāh* door.

Ostād Imam said: 'That will be Shaikh Bu Sa'īd.'

They opened the door and the Shaikh came in. He said to Ostād Imam: 'It has been made known to me that you have received a son, and I still have a name left⁵⁷. I bestow it upon him.'

And the Shaikh named him Bu Sa'īd.

In token of his gratitude, Ostād Imam gave three banquets. And Kṽāja Bu ‘Amr, who was Ostād Imam's son-in-law and a man of distinction with wealth, gave forty banquets in gratitude for this honor."

* * *

Kṽāja Abu Bakr-e Mo’addeb has recounted:

"Our Shaikh Abu Sa’id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Nishapur. In the midst of his discourse he said: 'Ostād Imam is late coming.'

And he twice said: 'How strange! How strange!'

He went on speaking for a moment but then once again he said: 'My heart is concerned for Ostād Imam. Last night he was in distress!'

When the Shaikh said these words, Ostād walked through the door. Shouts arose from the crowd.

The Shaikh looked at Ostād Imam and said: 'Oh Ostād, I was not forgetful of you last night. In place of the visit I should have made to comfort you, I will tell you the following story:

One day a landowner was receiving at home. His cultivator brought him the first cucumbers of the season. The landowner counted his family and gave one cucumber to each of them. And he gave one to the servant who was standing there in attendance.

None remained for the landowner. The servant bowed and taking the cucumber, began to eat it. The kṽāja's appetite was aroused. He said to the servant: "Give me a piece."

The servant bowed and gave the kṽāja a piece. When the landowner took a bite of it, it was very bitter. He said: "Oh servant, how can you eat a bitter cucumber like this with such delight?"

He replied: "My lord, for so many years I have eaten sweets from your hand. What excuse have I to reject one bitter morsel now?"

And the Shaikh added: 'Oh Ostād (verse),

Why grow annoyed with the loved one over trifles?
This love of yours is one day joy, one day pain.
If your lord humiliates you, that's no fault.
When he's tender again, the brand of his anger will cool.
Can one bad act undo a hundred kindnesses?
If you think of the thorns⁵⁸, you will not savor the date.

Book Two, Chapter One

If he becomes angry, you make up excuses.
It's not every day you can find another beloved.'

When Ostād heard these words, he let out a shout and rolled about on the floor and went on shouting until he lost consciousness. When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close and the public had been dispersed and the Shaikh himself had gone to his room, the spiritual masters and the Sufis came before Ostād Imam and asked: 'What happened last night?'

Ostād replied: 'It's a strange affair, indeed! Last night during my recitations, I felt sluggish. This disturbed me and I said to myself:

"I'll go to the Friday mosque and bathe in the mosque pool. Then I'll go to the tombs of the spiritual masters and say my recitations there."

When I arrived at the Friday mosque, I went to the pool and having wrapped my clothes in my prayer-rug, I placed them in an alcove and entered the pool. Then someone got off his horse and came in, picked up my clothes and shoes, and left. This made me very annoyed and upset. Meanwhile, I climbed out of the pool and returned naked to the *kānaqāh*.

Having put on some other clothes, I said to myself I must finish what I've started. I went outside again with the intention of visiting the tombs. When I reached the entrance of the Friday mosque, I struck my foot against a stone and fell face down. My foot was hurt and my turban had fallen off. Just then someone came along, snatched my turban and was gone. I sat there bewildered.

Looking up at the sky, I said: "Oh Lord God, if You don't need Bu'l-Qāsem – he cannot endure Your slaps and blows. Bu'l-Qāsem only wants to visit the shaikhs' tombs and say his recitations to please You. Since You have no need of it, he will stop!"

There was no one in the whole world who knew what happened to me last night. Now today the Shaikh says: "Oh Ostād, I was with you last night."

If the Shaikh has knowledge of this secret, think of how many shameful deeds of ours he must be aware of!"

* * *

I heard the following from *K̲vāja* Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri⁵⁹ and Shaikh Abu Bakr-e Jānāru⁶⁰. They have related:

"Every day, toward the hour of afternoon prayers, a raised platform that stood by the entrance to the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street, would be sprinkled with water, swept and covered over with rugs. There the Shaikh would sit in the company of the elders, while the younger men stood drawn up in a row. It was a charming spot, open to all sides, and quite pleasant.

One day while sitting there in this manner, the Shaikh raised his head and said: 'Would you like to see the spy of God's royal court? Look now, here he comes!'

Everyone present gazed about, but there was no one to see. Just then Ostād Imam appeared at the head of the street.

When he had drawn near, he said 'salaam' and passed on. The Shaikh looked after him and exclaimed: 'Ostād is indeed an *ostād*⁶¹!'

* * *

It is related that Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, one night thought to himself:

"Tomorrow I will attend the Shaikh's assembly and I will ask him: 'What is divine law and what is the mystic path?'

Let's see what he will say."

Early the following morning, Ostād Imam went to the Shaikh's assembly and sat down. The Shaikh began to discourse.

However, before Ostād Imam posed his question, the Shaikh said: "Oh you who would put questions on divine law and the mystic path, know I have summed up all the sciences of divine law and the mystic path in one couplet:

The beloved's message has come: Prepare for action.

That is the Law!

Show the heart's love and clear away the redundant.

That is the Path!"

.....

Emām al-Ḥarameyn Abu'l-Ma'ālī-ye Joveyni⁶², *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "Whatever I have read or noted down, or composed myself -- and I have pursued the task with great pains -- this Sultan of the Mystic Path has expressed in this one couplet."

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"The daughter of Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq, Lady Fāṭema by name, was married to Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri. She sought permission from her husband to attend our Shaikh's assembly, but Ostād Imam was opposed to this and would not consent.

After she had asked several times, Ostād said: 'I will consent, if you go in secret and wear a *nāvana* over your head so that no one will suspect who you are.'

.....

In the language of the Nishapuris the *nāvana* is an old, full length veil worn at night.

.....

Lady Fāṭema did as instructed and put an old veil over her head. Then she went to the Shaikh's assembly in secret and sat on the roof among the women. And that day Ostād Imam did not attend the assembly himself.

The Shaikh opened his discourse with an anecdote about Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq and then said: 'And behold, part of Bu 'Ali is here with us, a piece of himself is present listening!'

When Lady Fāṭema heard these words, she entered an ecstatic state, lost consciousness and slipped from the roof.

The Shaikh said: 'Oh Lord God, not in the presence of such a crowd!'⁶³

Just then, she ceased falling and remained suspended in mid-air. The other women reached down and lifted her back onto the roof.

When Lady Fāṭema returned home, she recounted to Ostād Imam what had happened."

* * *

I heard the following story from Shaikh Zeyn al-Ṭāyefa 'Omar-e Šowkāni, who has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd was riding through the bazaar of Nishapur along with Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri and a large company of Sufis -- *God sanctify their souls!* Boiled turnip

was on display in a particular shop. A darvish caught sight of this and, as it happened, his appetite was aroused.

The Shaikh knew through his clairvoyance and, pulling in the reins of his horse, said to Ḥasan: 'Go to this man's shop and buy all the turnip and beet that's there and bring it to me.'

At this same spot was a mosque. The Shaikh, accompanied by Ostād Imam and the other Sufis, entered the mosque.

Ḥasan went to the shop, weighed out all the turnip and beet there was, and bought it. Then he brought it to the company and the invitation for dinner was proclaimed.

The darvishes began to eat and the Shaikh accompanied them. Only Ostād Imam did not eat, for he felt disapproval in his heart because the mosque was in the middle of the bazaar and opened at the front. He said to himself: 'They are eating on a public thoroughfare.'

Ostād Imam did not extend his hand to partake of the meal. But the Shaikh, as was his custom, raised no objections.

Two or three days later, our Shaikh, together with Ostād Imam and a group of Sufis, was escorted to a banquet. Lavish care had been taken and all kinds of foods had been prepared. When the food was served, Ostād Imam happened to be sitting at a distance from a dish he felt like eating. He could not reach the food with his hand and was too embarrassed to ask for it. His desire was greatly aroused and he sat there preoccupied with this thought.

The Shaikh turned to him and said: 'Oh Ostād, last time they offered you food, you would not eat. Now that you are inclined to eat, they do not offer you the food.'

Ostād Imam repented of what had previously occurred in his heart and became aware of his error."

* * *

Shaikh Bu Naṣr recounted the following story, which he heard from Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb:

"One day in Nishapur, Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, defrocked a darvish, caused him great vexation, and drove him forth from the city. The reason for this was that the darvish had entertained amorous feelings for K^vāja Esmā'ilak-e Daqqāq, and Esmā'ilak was Ostād Imam's brother-in-law.

It seems the darvish had beseeched a Sufi supporter⁶⁴: 'Give a banquet tonight with reciters and see that Esmā'ilak is present, that

I may be in his company tonight and raise shouts gazing on his beauty. Indeed, I am burning up in my love for him.'

That night the supporter saw to the darvish's wish. He arranged the banquet and invited the reciters, as well as K^vāja Esmā'ilak. Thus, when the food was consumed, that night they performed the *samā'*. The following day, news reached Ostād Imam, whereupon he abused the darvish, took away his robe, repudiated him and drove him out of the city.

When word of this reached our Shaikh's *kānaqāh*, the darvishes were distressed but they never told the Shaikh about events that took place or informed him of any situation, for he would see and know of it himself, through his clairvoyance and miraculous powers.

The Shaikh called Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and said: 'Arrange a fine banquet for tonight, and do not be sparing with expenses. Roast many lambs and serve lots of almond candy. Invite the whole city and provide many candles and light them.'

Ḥasan goes on to relate:

"I went off and prepared everything in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions. I informed Ostād Imam and saw to it that all the Sufis of the city were present. That evening, when Ostād Imam arrived, our Shaikh had him sit on the raised platform alongside himself. The Sufis sat in three rows in front of the Shaikh's platform, and each row consisted of one hundred men.

Meanwhile, I spread out the table-cloth and K^vāja Bu Ṭāher was in charge of managing the banquet. He had not yet reached the age of shaving and was extremely beautiful. He had on a half-length robe and was moving about at the head of the table-cloth like a shining candle.

When it was time for dessert, I brought a large bowl of almond candy before the Shaikh and Ostād Imam.

The Shaikh and Ostād ate a few pieces of candy, and when they had enough, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu Ṭāher, come take this bowl and bring it before the darvish Bu 'Ali-ye Toršizi. Eat half a candy yourself and put the other half in Bu 'Ali's mouth!'

K^vāja Bu Ṭāher took the almond candy, placed it on his hand and went before the darvish Bu 'Ali. Kneeling with respect, he ate half of a candy himself and put the other half in the darvish's mouth. And he did the same with a second candy.

At that, the darvish let out a cry and tore his robe. Uttering a vow to depart for Mecca⁶⁵, he ran out of the *kānaqāh*, shouting as he ran.

The Shaikh said to *KVāja Bu Ṭāher*: 'I dedicate you to the service of this darvish. Take his staff and water jug and set out after him. Be of service to him. Whenever he stops for a rest, massage him, and continue like that all the way to the Ka'ba!'

KVāja Bu Ṭāher took the darvish's water-skin, staff and ewer and set out after him. Bu 'Ali looked back and saw that *KVāja Bu Ṭāher* was running after him. He stopped and when *KVāja Bu Ṭāher* caught up, Bu 'Ali asked: 'Where are you going?'

He replied: 'My father has sent me to wait upon you.'

And he explained what had happened. Bu 'Ali turned around and went before the Shaikh and said: 'Oh Shaikh, for the sake of God, take back Bu Ṭāher!'

The Shaikh recalled *KVāja Bu Ṭāher* and the darvish bowed and departed.

When Bu 'Ali had gone, the Shaikh turned to Ostād Imam and said: 'Oh Ostād, if it is possible to drive a darvish from the city with half a piece of almond candy and send him on his way to the Ḥejāz, what is the purpose of causing the fellow so much distress and taking away his robe and disgracing him?'

In any case, what has happened through my doing, was for your sake. For the last four years this darvish has been taken with Bu Ṭāher, but I did not bring this matter out in the open. If it had not been for you, I would not have revealed this to anyone.'

Ostād rose to his feet and sought forgiveness. He said: 'An error has been committed. Every day I must learn from you once again what it means to be a Sufi.'

All the Sufis present felt a flush of joy and ecstatic states were experienced."

* * *

It has been related that when Ostād Imam's hostility and disapproval of our Shaikh, *God sanctify both their souls*, had changed to friendship and concord, he requested of the Shaikh: "Once a week you must speak before an assembly in my *kānaqāh*."

The Shaikh consented, and one day every week he gave a discourse there.

Book Two, Chapter One

One day, it was the Shaikh's turn to speak. When the pulpit in Ostād Imam's *kānaqāh* had been provided with carpets and people were arriving and seating themselves, Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku⁶⁶ came to pay a visit to Ostād Imam.

When they had sat down and exchanged greetings with one another, Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku asked: "What is all this, now?"

Ostād Imam replied: "Shaikh Bu Sa'id is about to speak before an assembly. Have a seat yourself and listen."

Bu 'Abdollāh said: "I am against Bu Sa'id. I do not believe in him."

Ostād replied: "I was the same until I saw what the truth is. But sit down and you will see."

Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku took a seat and then Ostād Imam said: "Be careful! This man can read people's minds. Don't do or think anything improper, because he will immediately make it public."

Then our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came in and ascended the pulpit. The Qor'ānic reciters intoned their recitations and the Shaikh pronounced an invocation to God.

When the Shaikh began his discourse, Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku secretly puffed out his cheeks with air and whispered to himself: "How much wind is in Wind's Castle⁶⁷!"

He had scarcely finished thinking this, when the Shaikh turned to him and remarked: "Yes indeed, Wind's Castle is the source of wind⁶⁸!"

Having said these words, the Shaikh went on with his discourse.

Ostad Imam asked Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh: "What did you do?"

He explained what he'd done and Ostād Imam said: "I told you not to do anything improper because this man is clairvoyant with regard to everything you do, think or say."

When the Shaikh had warmed up in his discourse, Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh beheld his mystic state and the power he possessed and the degree of his clairvoyance. He thought to himself: "So many times have I made the pilgrimage to Mecca, destitute of all means⁶⁹, and I have met so many spiritual masters and waited upon them! What is the reason that so much has been revealed to this man and nothing has been revealed to me?"

The Shaikh immediately turned to him and said: "Oh *Kvāja*,

You are like that, for your fortune is such as it is.

I am like this, for my fortune is such as it is.

God's blessings be upon Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all."

And the Shaikh drew his hand over his face⁷⁰, descended from the pulpit, and came before Ostād Imam and Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku.

When they had sat down together, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id said to Ostād Imam: "Tell this good *k^vāja* to be conciliated with me."

Bu 'Abdollāh replied: "I will be conciliated with you, oh Shaikh, if you come to visit my *kānaqāh* every Thursday. Come from now on and I will be conciliated."

Shaikh Bu Sa'id said: "I cannot do that. Ask me for something else."

Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh answered: "That is my desire!"

Shaikh Bu Sa'id said: "The glance of many spiritual masters and men of distinction has fallen upon you. I shall come for the sake of their glances and not for your sake."

When the Shaikh said these words, weeping and loud shouts broke out among the gathering. Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh also wept profusely and the hostility and disapproval which he had felt in his heart towards our Shaikh, disappeared. He left in a refreshed state and all those present were elated when they rose to go.

.....

Such was the state of these men, because they acted out of honesty. They were not endowed with today's respect based on lip service and hypocrisy. Consequently, from a truthful word which they spoke, such good cheer and freshness could result -- due to their sincerity and their refusal, for the sake of religion, to engage in flattery.

In our day and age not one atom of spiritual peace appears from the thousands of words we utter out of consideration and courtesy, for our words are tainted with hypocrisy, deceit and flattery. Indeed, they consist of this and nothing more.

May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, wake us from our sleep of negligence before we die, and bestow upon us the grace to conform to truthfulness and to follow the example of our spiritual masters.

* * *

It has been related that once Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh had renounced his hostility toward our Shaikh, *God sanctify both their souls*, he often went to visit our Shaikh and would sit and speak with him. However, in his heart Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh strongly disapproved of the Shaikh practicing the *samā'* and dancing, and from time to time he would declare this openly to people.

One night Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh had a dream in which he heard a spirit voice say:

"Rise and dance for the sake of God!"

He woke up and exclaimed: *"There is no strength or power save in God, the Exalted, the Mighty!"*⁷¹ This is a confused dream which Satan has sent me."

He went back to sleep, but once again he had the same dream in which the voice was saying:

"Rise and dance for the sake of God!"

He woke again, invoked God's protection, and performed devotional recitations. Next, he recited a few chapters from the Qor'ān.

He went to sleep again and the dream returned. Since it occurred three times, he knew the dream couldn't be anything but the truth.

When he got up in the morning, he realized he had had this dream because of his disapproval of our Shaikh's dancing. He went to our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's *kānaqāh* to pay a visit to the Shaikh. When he arrived at the door of our Shaikh's *kānaqāh*, our Shaikh was saying from inside the *kānaqāh*:

"Rise and dance for the sake of God!"

Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh experienced a flush of joy and the disapproval he felt towards our Shaikh's performing the *samā'* and dancing disappeared from his heart as well.

* * *

One day during the same period, Shaikh Bu ‘Abdollāh-e Bāku came to visit our Shaikh – *God sanctify both their souls!* The Shaikh was sitting on a regal throne, propped up like a sultan.

Seeing him like this, disapproval welled up in Shaikh Bu ‘Abdollāh-e Bāku's heart. When this thought passed through his mind, the Shaikh turned to him and said: "Do not look at the throne. Look at the character and disposition!"

When our Shaikh revealed this subtle point, namely that a man's worth depends on his interior, not on his outward appearance, for: "*Verily, God does not look at your appearances, nor at your actions, but He looks at your hearts*" -- due to this concise utterance, Shaikh Bu ‘Abdollāh dropped his disapproval of this as well, and vowed to himself never to object to our Shaikh again.

* * *

Emām al-Ḥaramayn Abu'l-Ma‘āli-ye Joveyni⁷², *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has recounted:

"When Shaikh Abu Sa‘id came to Nishapur, my father was extremely hostile to him, so much so that no one could even mention the Shaikh in his presence.

One day when we had finished the morning prayers and recitations, he said to me: 'Get dressed, for we are going to visit Shaikh Bu Sa‘id-e Bu'l-Keyr.'

I was amazed to hear him say this.

The two of us went to the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* and when we came through the *kānaqāh* door, Shaikh Bu Sa‘id said: 'Come in, oh Friend of God, and join the Beloved of God!'

I was amazed to hear these words.

My father went inside. The Shaikh was alone in his cell of seclusion and called to his disciples: 'Come and help me rise to my feet.'

.....

Toward the end of his life our Shaikh had great difficulty rising to his feet. Two persons were necessary to take hold of his arm and lift him from his place. Earlier while undergoing ascetic practices and self-mortification, he had often hung by his feet upside down in pits. For this reason he now sat on a raised platform most of the time and would put his legs over the side and support him-

Book Two, Chapter One

self with his hands when he wished to rise without someone's assistance.

.....

Two of his disciples came running and lifted the Shaikh to his feet. The Shaikh embraced my father and they sat down together and talked for a while. A little later, Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri came in and they conversed together for some time. Then Ostād rose to his feet and left. My father gazed after Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem as he was leaving.

The Shaikh put his mouth to my father's ear and whispered something. Thereupon, my father kissed the Shaikh on the thigh.

This increased my amazement all the more.

Then my father rose to his feet and we left the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*.

When we had returned to our *kānaqāh*, I asked my father: 'Today I have been struck with amazement because of three things. First, having been so hostile to Shaikh Bu Sa'id, this morning without any reason you ordered me: "Rise, for we are going to visit the Shaikh."

Second, when we came before the Shaikh, he said: "Come in, oh Friend of God, and join the Beloved of God!"

And third, when Ostād Imam rose to leave, you stared after him, and then the Shaikh whispered something in your ear and you kissed the Shaikh's thigh.'

My father replied: 'Know that last night I had a dream that I was walking past a venerable, sanctified place -- a beautiful spot with vegetation. There I beheld Shaikh Bu Sa'id speaking before an assembly and many people were on hand. Due to the extreme hostility I felt in my heart toward the Shaikh, I turned my eyes away from that spot. A heavenly voice declared: "You are turning your face away from a person who holds the rank of Beloved of God here on earth."

When I heard that, my human jealousy was aroused. I thought to myself: "If he has the rank of Beloved of God, what rank do I hold?"

The same voice declared: "You are the Friend of God."

I woke up and nothing of my former hostility toward the Shaikh remained. For every previous disagreement, one thousand forms of love had become manifest.

*"He has joined their hearts together. Though you had spent all there is on the earth, you could not have joined their hearts together; but God has joined them together."*⁷³

Today I said we would go to visit the Shaikh and when we entered, he said: "Come in, oh Friend of God, and join the Beloved of God!"

Thus, he revealed: "Through my clairvoyance and miraculous power I am aware of what you saw in your dream last night."

When Ostād Imam stood up to leave, I gazed after him. It passed through my mind: "If the Shaikh holds the rank of Beloved of God and I am the Friend of God, what is Ostād Imam's rank?"

The Shaikh put his mouth to my ear and whispered: "Ostād is the Speaker with God -- *He is exalted!*"

I was overwhelmed by what the Shaikh said and by his gift of clairvoyance with regard to the hearts of God's servants -- *He is sublime and exalted* -- and I lowered my head and kissed the Shaikh's thigh.'

I asked my father: 'How can I understand the meaning of these different ranks and titles⁷⁴?'

My father cited the validated Tradition in which the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

*'The learned of my community are like the prophets of the tribe of Israel.'*⁷⁵

Thereafter, my father would go to greet the Shaikh every day or he would send me."

* * *

The *'amid*⁷⁶ of Khorasan has been quoted as saying:

"The reason for my devotion to Shaikh Bu Sa'id and his offspring is this. When I first came to Nishapur, I was a simple cavalryman and I was staying in the neighborhood Dar-e 'Azra. I was called Hājeb Moḥammad. Twice every day I would pass by the door of Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr's *kānaqāh* and take a look inside. The days I saw the Shaikh, turned out to be auspicious. I took this to be a good omen.

One night I thought: 'Tomorrow I shall go to greet the Shaikh and bring him a gift.'

Book Two, Chapter One

I counted out one thousand silver dirhems in newly minted coins of the day, which were valued at thirty to a dinar. I wrapped the coins in a piece of paper with the intention of going to visit the Shaikh and placing the money before him the next morning. I was all alone in the house, nor did I speak about this to anyone.

Then it occurred to me that one thousand dirhems was too much. Five hundred would be enough. I divided the money and the piece of paper in half. Five hundred dirhems I put behind a pillow and the other five hundred I left there.

The following morning, when I had risen and performed the prayers, I took the money and went before the Shaikh. I greeted him with 'salaam' and handed the money to Kvāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb.

Ḥasan gently whispered in the Shaikh's ear: 'Hājeb Moḥammad has brought an amount of coins.'

The Shaikh said: 'May it prove a blessing! But he has not brought all the money. He has left half of it behind the pillow. Ḥasan has a debt of one thousand dirhems. Let him give Ḥasan the full sum and free Ḥasan's heart of his debts.'

The 'amid goes on to relate:

"When I heard these words, I was utterly confounded. I immediately sent a servant to bring the rest of the money, and gave it to Ḥasan.

Then I said: 'Oh Shaikh, take me into your good graces.'

The Shaikh held me by the hand and said: 'It is done. Go in peace.'

After that day, no one had the upper hand over me. I lived in security. Though I incurred expenses, they were always within my means. I never had to undergo hardships and from day to day my power went on increasing.

When I left that day, the Shaikh glanced after me and said: 'What achievements await that man in the future!'

* * *

Bu Sa'id-e Kaššāb, who was the personal servant of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One day our Shaikh came forth from the *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street to go to the bathhouse. The 'amid of Khorasan was passing down the street dressed in a *vizāri* robe⁷⁷ and riding a horse that bore a leather coverlet. He was not yet the 'amid but was called Hājeb Moḥammad.

When his eye fell upon the Shaikh, he dismounted and made obeisance. The Shaikh was seated on the raised platform by the door of the *kānaqāh*. The 'amid came forward and having made obeisance, said: 'May I have permission to speak?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Speak!'

The 'amid said: 'Oh Shaikh, you must accord me a place in your heart.'

The Shaikh answered: 'It is done.'

The 'amid made obeisance and left.

The Shaikh entered the bath and went on talking to me about this matter. I could not restrain myself but exclaimed: 'Oh Shaikh, what this man said to you was not proper, and yet you gave him your approval. What right did he have to that?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Ḥājeb Moḥammad has a secret that he shares with God -- *He is exalted!* It is no surprise he acquires whatever he seeks.'"

.....

From that day forward his affairs prospered until not long thereafter the following incident took place. *K^vāja* Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the grandson of the Shaikh, has related:

"One day I was standing before the Shaikh, when Aḥmad-e Dehestāni, who was then the 'amid of Khorasan, and this same Ḥājeb Moḥammad, who was the 'amid's chamberlain, came to pay a visit to our Shaikh.

Ḥājeb Moḥammad entered the *kānaqāh* first, and he was an elegant young man. He came forward and made obeisance and the Shaikh said: 'Come in, *K^vāja* 'amid!'

He made obeisance again and the Shaikh said: 'Come in, oh 'amid of Khorasan!'

Ḥājeb Moḥammad replied: 'Here comes the 'amid of Khorasan now.'

And Aḥmad-e Dehestāni, who was the 'amid of Khorasan, was following right behind him.

The Shaikh said: 'No, you are the 'amid of Khorasan. He is a dog! Let him be torn to pieces by dogs!'

And the Shaikh paid no attention to Aḥmad-e Dehestāni, who turned about and left.

During that same week, Aḥmad-e Dehestāni was killed and his body was cut into pieces. Ḥājeb Moḥammad became the 'amid of Khorasan, and for sixty years he received the tax of Khorasan.

Book Two, Chapter One

And he would continually declare with pride: 'I have been appointed by Shaikh Bu Sa'id to the post of *'amid* of Khorasan.'

* * *

Kvāja Imam Bu'l-Fotuh 'Abbās has reported:

"I went with my father to Isfahan to visit Neẓām al-Molk⁷⁸ – *God have mercy on him!* When we went before Neẓām al-Molk, my father invoked God on his behalf.

Neẓām al-Molk said: 'Oh Kvāja, whatever I have achieved, I owe to Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr.'

My father asked: 'And how is that?'

He replied: 'One day I was in Nishapur, riding an inferior nag, and I was going down 'Adani Kuyān Street. Someone came up behind me and said: "You are being called."

I turned around and entered the *kānaqāh* and there I beheld Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr, who asked after my well-being. In fact, before that I had already met the Shaikh in Meyhana."

.....

And that story will be related in its proper place.

.....

"The Shaikh took my hand and said: "You shall be a man of virtue."

I made obeisance and left.

The following day I attended the Shaikh's assembly and sat down behind a column in such a way that the Shaikh could not see me.

The Shaikh delivered his discourse and when he brought the assembly to a close, he said: "Ḥasan has a debt to pay."

I had had a belt made for myself, a handsome one, in accordance with the affectation of young men. I undid the belt and donated it.

The Shaikh ordered Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Bring me that belt."

Ḥasan brought the belt to the Shaikh. The Shaikh took it and put his finger through the buckle of the belt and twisting it several times, said: "It will not be long before you have four thousand men buckling their belts in your service, and among them four hundred will have belts of gold."

Today I reviewed my army. The men come to four thousand strong, four hundred of them wearing belts of gold -- not one man more, nor one less.

Whatever power I have acquired, I acquired through the Shaikh and for that reason I am the servant of all the Sufis in the world."

* * *

In Marv there was an old man known by the name of Moḥammad-e Bu Naṣr-e Ḥabibi. He was one of the spiritual masters of Transoxania⁷⁹. When Boḡrā Kān⁸⁰ attempted to exterminate the Sufis of Transoxania, a group of their spiritual masters secretly escaped to Marv. This Moḥammad-e Ḥabibi was one of their number. He had never met our Shaikh, for by the time he came to Marv, the Shaikh had moved to Nishapur.

In Marv there was an imam by the name of Abu Bakr-e Kaṭīb, and he had been a student of Imam Qaffāl's and met our Shaikh in Qaffāl's class.

One time he was about to go to Nishapur on an errand. Moḥammad-e Ḥabibi came to him and said: "I hear that you are leaving for Nishapur. I wish to make a request."

He asked: "What is it?"

He said: "I want you to ask Shaikh Bu Sa'id a question and bring me his answer. But he mustn't know that it is I who have posed this question. Don't say anything to him about me."

.....

Imam Abu Bakr has related:

"I asked: 'What is the question?'

He replied: 'Ask him: Are traits subject to obliteration?'

I said: 'I will not be able to remember this. Write it on a piece of paper.'

He wrote down the question and gave it to me and ordered me: 'Don't say anything to the Shaikh about me.'"

Abu Bakr-e Kaṭīb goes on to say:

"I arrived in Nishapur and put up at the caravanserai. Immediately two Sufis entered and began calling out: 'Where is K^vāja Abu Bakr-e Kaṭīb, who has come with the caravan from Marv?'

I replied: 'I am Abu Bakr.'

Book Two, Chapter One

They came before me and said: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id sends his greetings and adds: "I am not at ease because you are staying the night in the caravanserai. You must come and stay with me."'

I answered: 'Just let me go to the bath and wash myself thoroughly and I will come.'

The Shaikh's greetings and his message caused a state of ecstasy to come over me, because I knew for certain that no one could have given him news of me this quickly. He knew about me and my situation solely through his clairvoyance and his miraculous powers.

I immediately went to the bathhouse, washed myself thoroughly and when I came out, I saw the same two darvishes standing at the entrance to the bathhouse, with rose water and incense. They said: 'The Shaikh has sent us to wait upon you.'

I went with them before the Shaikh and when the Shaikh saw me, he said:

*'Hail to So'dā ⁸¹, and to her messenger, peace!
How fair to us appears the messenger's face
Out of our love for the face of her who sends him!'*

I greeted the Shaikh with 'salaam'. He returned my greeting and said: 'You may take the message of the spiritual master lightly, but to me his words are very dear. Since you set out from Marv, I have been counting the stages of your journey, one after the other.'"

Abu Bakr-e Kaṭīb relates:

"I was utterly confounded.

The Shaikh said: 'Give me the message now. What did the spiritual master say?'"

Abu Bakr goes on to relate:

"At that moment I forgot everything I had ever learned. Such was the awe I felt before the Shaikh.

I replied: 'Oh Shaikh, I cannot remember. I have written it down on a piece of paper, but the paper is in the robe I wore during my journey.'

The Shaikh said: 'You have memorized points of agreement and disagreement among the jurists⁸², but you could not retain the spiritual master's question?'

Hearing these words, I felt even more despondent.

The Shaikh said: 'Will you remember his question, if I tell it to you?'

I replied: 'If it please the Shaikh, tell me.'

The Shaikh said: 'The question is this: Is it possible for traits to be obliterated?'

I replied: 'It is just as the Shaikh has said.'

The Shaikh went on: 'If I give you the answer now, you will be obliged to depart immediately. See to whatever business you have and when you are ready to go, I will give you the answer.'

While I was in Nishapur, I visited the Shaikh every evening and the Shaikh treated me with all forms of respect and generosity.

When I was ready to leave, I came before the Shaikh and said: 'Give me the answer to the spiritual master's question.'

The Shaikh replied: 'Tell the *pir*:

*"(Hell-fire) leaves nothing and spares nothing."*⁸³

If the essence disappears, how can traits remain?"

Abu Bakr-e Kaṭīb relates:

"I lowered my head in perplexity and said: 'Oh Shaikh, explain these words for me.'

The Shaikh said: 'There is no intellectual way of explaining this. Learn these verses and recite them to the *pir*:

My body became all tears and my eyes wept.
In love with you, I must live without a body.
None of my traits remains. What is such love?
Since I'm all the beloved, who is the lover?'

I said: 'May it please the Shaikh to have this written down for me.'

The Shaikh ordered Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to write the lines of verse and give them to me.

When I reached Marv, Pir Moḥammad-e Ḥabibi came to me immediately. I said: 'Oh Pir, you sent me to a sultan before whom the whole world's secrets are laid out on a platter.'

And I recounted everything that had happened, and told him the answer to the question.

When he heard the verses, he let out a shout and fell down unconscious. They had two men lift him up and carry him back to his home, but on the seventh day thereafter he passed away.

God have mercy on him!"

* * *

It has been related that during the time our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, a certain imam named Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Tuni was in the city and he was a follower of Bu 'Abdollah-e Karrām⁸⁴. Bu'l-Ḥasan greatly disapproved of our Shaikh and his disapproval was so extreme that whenever anyone mentioned the Shaikh in his presence, he would utter a curse. And all the while that our Shaikh had been in Nishapur, Bu'l-Ḥasan had not come to 'Adani Kuyān Street where the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* was.

One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said: "Saddle my horse. We're going to visit KṼāja Imam Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Tuni."

The group of Sufis and the disciples, in their hearts, objected to the Shaikh's intention, thinking: "The Shaikh is about to visit someone who does not even tolerate mention of the Shaikh, and if he does hear the Shaikh's name, pronounces a curse on him."

The Shaikh mounted up and set out with all his disciples.

Along the way they met a *rāfezi*⁸⁵ coming out of his house. As soon as he caught sight of the Shaikh and his group, he cursed the Shaikh. The disciples were on the point of doing him some harm but the Shaikh said: "Be calm! It may be that he will be given divine mercy for these curses."

The disciples asked: "How could a person be given divine mercy for cursing someone like you?"

The Shaikh replied: "*God forbid!* He is not cursing me. He imagines I am wrong and that he is right. It is that wrong that he is cursing, for the sake of God."

Meanwhile, the man stood there, listening to what the Shaikh was saying. Suddenly he fell to the ground before the Shaikh's horse and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have repented. You are true and I am the false one. Invite me to Islam that I may become a Muslim anew!"

The Shaikh said to the disciples and companions: "You see what effect it has to utter curses for the sake of God -- *He is exalted!*"

When they'd gone on a bit further, Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb sent a darvish ahead to inform Imam Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Tuni that the Shaikh was coming to visit him. The darvish informed Bu'l-Ḥasan and the imam cursed the Shaikh, adding: "What business does he have

with me? He should go to the church of the Christians. That's where he belongs!"

And as it happened, it was Sunday.

The darvish went back to Ḥasan and reported what had taken place. Meanwhile, the Shaikh himself knew what had transpired. He said: "Oh Ḥasan, what is going on? Where has that darvish just been?"

Ḥasan reported what had happened. The Shaikh said: "Now what has the *pir* ordered us?"

Ḥasan replied: "He says to go to the church!"

The Shaikh turned his horse around and said: "*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, one must do as the pir commands.*"

And the Shaikh set out for the church.

When he arrived at the church, the Christians had gathered there and were engaged in their service. When they saw the Shaikh, they all collected around him and gazed at him, wondering why he had come.

At the head of the church the Christians had made a recess and in front of the recess, projecting from the wall, they had fashioned the image of Jesus and Mary. Facing in that direction, they would prostrate themselves.

The Shaikh looked askance at the images and said:

*"Is it you who said to the people, take me and my mother as gods to the exclusion of Allah?"*⁸⁶

If Moḥammad and the religion of Moḥammad are true, bow down this instant before God – *He is sublime and exalted!*"

When the Shaikh said these words, both images immediately fell to the ground and their faces were pointing towards Mecca. When the Christians beheld this, they raised a cry.

Forty of them immediately became Muslims and put on patched frocks. The group of Sufis that was with the Shaikh donated their robes, so that when the Christians had become Muslims and performed the major ablution of conversion to Islam, they put on these patched frocks.

Then the Shaikh turned to the group and said: "This is how it turns out for whoever follows the instructions of the *pirs*. All this is from the grace of that spiritual master's instructions."

The Shaikh went back to the *kānaqāh*, accompanied by all those who had become Muslims. News of what happened and

Book Two, Chapter One

what the Shaikh said, was brought to Imam Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Tunī. An ecstatic state came over Imam Bu'l-Ḥasan. He exclaimed: "Bring the piece of wood."

He meant a litter.

"Put me in it and carry me to Shaikh Bu Sa'id's *kānaqāh*."

They put him in the litter and brought him there. When he arrived at the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*, he said: "Lift me from the litter."

They lifted him out and from the *kānaqāh* door to the Shaikh's raised platform he crawled on his side, letting out shouts and cries. There he fell at the Shaikh's feet and grasped his hands and raised up cries.

Ecstatic states came over the group and the imam tore his robe and following his example, the Shaikh and the disciples did the same. Bu'l-Ḥasan repented of his hostility and sought forgiveness for what he had done in the past. He became a faithful supporter and devotee of our Shaikh.

* * *

It has been related that during the time our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, one day a group of darvishes who were the Shaikh's devotees, passed by the bazaar. Singers had come from Ṭus and were performing the *samā'*⁸⁷ in the bazaar. When the darvishes came back to the *kānaqāh*, they said to the Shaikh: "Singers and reciters from Ṭus have arrived and they are performing the *samā'* in the bazaar. We want to hear their singing."

The Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Go out and search through the bazaar of Nishapur for whoever is the most handsome man. Tell him: 'Reciters have arrived from Ṭus and the darvishes wish to hear their singing. See to the cost of providing the reciters with dinner so that tonight our companions may enjoy the reciters' singing.'"

Ḥasan went out and walked about the bazaar of Nishapur. Then he returned before the Shaikh. The Shaikh asked: "What did you do?"

He replied: "I went all round Nishapur but I didn't see anyone more handsome than the Shaikh."

When the Shaikh heard these words, he removed his mantle from his shoulders and said: "Oh Ḥasan, take this to the shop of my Bu Ja'far and tell him I say: 'Give fifty dinars so that tonight we may prepare a stew for the group, and the reciters may inspire the

darvishes with the *samā'* -- until such time as some merchant supplier appears and frees their heart of concern for their debt to you."

Ḥasan has related:

"Following the Shaikh's instructions, I went to Bu Ja'far's shop and told him what the Shaikh had ordered. Bu Ja'far said: 'Oh Ḥasan, do you testify that the Shaikh actually said "my Bu Ja'far"?'"

I replied: 'On the day after the resurrection I will bear witness that the Shaikh said "my Bu Ja'far".'

Bu Ja'far counted out fifty dinars, wrapped the money in a piece of paper and gave it to me along with the Shaikh's mantle, saying: 'Take this to the Shaikh.'

I departed and brought what he had given me before the Shaikh. But just then Bu Ja'far came in behind me with another fifty dinars and a servant was with him carrying a length of *fuṭa* cloth⁸⁸ on his head. Bu Ja'far placed this before the Shaikh and said: 'What I sent by the hand of Ḥasan was following your instructions. What I have brought myself is a token of my gratitude for your having pronounced the words "my Bu Ja'far".'

Oh darvishes, give a banquet with this money and tear this *fuṭa* cloth into pieces, for these words will be my helper on the day of resurrection!"

* * *

Also during the time that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, who was our Shaikh's personal servant, had borrowed money from everyone and spent it on the darvishes. For the moment nothing was coming into the *kānaqāh* and the creditors were pressing their demands.

One day the whole group of them came to the door of the *kānaqāh*. The Shaikh said to Ḥasan: "Tell them to come in."

Ḥasan went out and had them come inside. When they entered, they made obeisance before the Shaikh and sat down. Just then a child peddler passed before the *kānaqāh* door and cried out: "Sweets!"

The Shaikh said: "Bring that peddler inside."

They brought him before the Shaikh and the Shaikh said: "Weigh out everything he has."

Book Two, Chapter One

All his sweets were weighed out and placed before the group of creditors and the Sufis, and they ate them. The child peddler said: "I must have the money for this."

The Shaikh said: "It will appear."

After a few moments, he repeated his demand. The Shaikh said: "It will appear."

Once more the boy asked for the money and the Shaikh gave him the same answer. The boy said: "My master will beat me."

When he said this, he began to cry.

That very instant, a man entered the *kānaqāh* and placed a purse of money before the Shaikh. The man said: "So-and-so has sent this and asks to be remembered in your prayers."

The Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Take this money and distribute it among the creditors."

Ḥasan paid everyone his money and paid the child for the sweets. No money was left over, nor did it fall short. The money covered the debts exactly.

The Shaikh said: "The money was attached to the tears of this child."

* * *

KVāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has related:

"Our Shaikh had a devotee in Nishapur whose name was Bu 'Amr Ḥasku. He was a rich man and Chief of the Merchants⁸⁹ of Nishapur. One day he called me and said: 'From head to foot I've become a devotee of the Shaikh. I entreat you, come to me for everything the Shaikh needs. Even if it is a great amount, don't hesitate.'"

Ḥasan goes on to relate:

"One day the Shaikh had sent me seven times for all manner of requests to Bu 'Amr, who had provided everything. Then, for the eighth time, as the sun was setting, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Ḥasan, go to Bu 'Amr Ḥasku and bring back rose water, aloes-wood and camphor.'"

I set out but felt shame going before him. He was just locking up his shop. When he caught sight of me, he said: 'Oh Ḥasan, why are you standing there at this late hour?'

I replied: 'Oh Ostād, I feel shame. I have come to you so many times today.'

He said: 'What does the Shaikh order, for I am a servant at the Shaikh's command.'

I said: 'Rose water, aloes-wood and camphor.'

He opened the shop door and gave me what I'd asked for.

Then he said to me: 'Since you feel shame coming to me for these trifles, tomorrow I will borrow one thousand dinars against my caravanserai and bathhouse. I will take that money for you to spend, so that you only have to come to me for more important matters.'

Ḥasan has related:

"I was filled with joy and said to myself: 'I have escaped from the humiliation of begging and soliciting.'

I went before the Shaikh as happy as could be and put the aloes-wood, rose water and camphor down in front of him. The Shaikh gazed at me with a look of disapproval and said: 'Oh Ḥasan, go outside and cleanse your inner self of love of the world. Only then will I allow you to sit with the Sufis.'

Ḥasan relates:

"I went outside and stood by the *kānaqāh* door, barefoot and with bare head⁹⁰, and I sought forgiveness and wept profusely and rubbed my face on the ground. Then I came back in.

That night the Shaikh did not speak to me and the following day he came out to give his discourse. Every day while speaking, the Shaikh would turn to Bu 'Amr Ḥasku but that day he didn't look at him.

When the Shaikh had finished his discourse, Bu 'Amr Ḥasku came to me and asked: 'Oh Ḥasan, what has happened? The Shaikh didn't look at me today.'

I replied: 'I don't know.'

And I told him what had happened the previous evening. Bu 'Amr went before the Shaikh's raised platform, kissed it and exclaimed: 'Oh Beloved of this day and age, my life and my existence depend on your glance. Today you didn't look at me at all. Tell me what I have done that I may seek forgiveness and offer excuses.'

The Shaikh said: 'You would bring the hawk of my spiritual aspiration down from the summit of the seventh heaven to the lower depths of the earth and fasten it to one thousand dinars. If you want my heart to be content with you, bring me those thousand dinars in cash. You will see how much they weigh in the scales of my aspiration.'

Ostād Bu 'Amr went off and after a short time brought two purses, each containing five hundred Nishapuri dinars. These purses he placed before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: 'Oh Ḥasan,

Book Two, Chapter One

take this money and buy cows and sheep. With the beef prepare a *harisa* stew and with the mutton prepare a *zir-vā*⁹¹ spiced with saffron and aromatic herbs. And buy lots of almond candies. Light one thousand candles during the daytime and provide lots of aloes-wood and rose water. Tomorrow let the banquet be held in Pušangān.'

.....

Pušangān is a very pleasant village on the outskirts of Nishapur. The people of Nishapur go there for sightseeing and recreation.

.....

'Moreover, proclaim throughout the city: "Whoever wants a meal which brings no obligation in this world and no dispute in the world to come, let him be on hand!"'

Hasan has related:

"I saw to all these preparations and sent the proclamation around the city. More than two thousand people came to Pušangān. The Shaikh arrived with his disciples and seated both common and elite at the feast. Then, while the people at large were eating, the Shaikh, with his own blessed hand, sprinkled them with rose water and burned aloes-wood.

In the midst of the people was someone who disapproved of the Shaikh. As it happened, he thought to himself: 'What extravagance this man commits! To light a thousand candles in the daytime is, indeed, extravagance⁹².'

The Shaikh, making his way through the crowd, stood before the man and said: 'Oh generous fellow, empty your breast of disapproval and quarrelsomeness. Whatever you do for the sake of the True, will not be extravagance. But spend a single *dāng*⁹³ of silver for the concupiscent soul, and that is extravagance.'

The man fell at the Shaikh's feet and repenting of his former life, became the Shaikh's devotee and gave away all the wealth he possessed."

Hasan relates:

"When they had finished eating, the Shaikh departed. Moreover, everything had been consumed. I gathered all the tablecloths and linens, and returned to the city. When night arrived, the Shaikh went to bed and then called me. He said: 'Oh Hasan, take a look and see what is still left in the storeroom. I am unable to sleep.'

I searched the whole storeroom but didn't find anything. I came back and said: 'I didn't see anything.'

The Shaikh said: 'Search harder! And look in the table-cloths.'

I went back and shook out the table-cloths. A single piece of dry bread fell out of one of them and I brought it before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: 'Go give it away, so I can fall asleep.'

I gave it away and the Shaikh went to sleep."

.....

Such was the customary practice of all the spiritual masters. Whatever came into their hands, they consumed the same day. They would store up nothing for tomorrow -- not a little, nor a great amount. And that is in accordance with the customary practice of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, who entered the cell of seclusion of Belāl, the Abyssinian⁹⁴, and saw half a piece of dry bread laid on top of a broken water pot. The Prophet said: "Oh Belāl, what is this?"

Belāl replied: "Oh Prophet of God, that was a whole piece of dry bread. Last night I broke my fast with half of it and I've kept the rest for when I break my fast tonight."

The Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, said:

"Consume everything, oh Belāl, and have no fear of scarcity on the part of the Possessor of the Celestial Throne⁹⁵."

* * *

Also during the period that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, disciples of all sorts were coming before him. Some were of refined character, others were not.

One quite rough fellow who was from a village, had repented and was staying in the *kānaqāh*. He wore a pair of shoes with metal on them, the kind worn in the mountains. Consequently, whenever he entered the *kānaqāh*, a noise from his shoes reached the ears of the esteemed darvishes. And he would slam the door against the wall. His movements generally were such that he caused the Sufis much annoyance. They were greatly disturbed by his commotion and tumult.

One day the Shaikh called this darvish and said: "You must go to Dar-e Moyun."

.....

Book Two, Chapter One

This is a valley in the mountains between Nishapur and Tus. When people travel from Nishapur to Tus, their road passes along this valley. And there is a stream which flows out of that valley and joins the river of Karv-e Nišābur⁹⁶.

.....

The Shaikh went on to say:

"Once you enter the valley, go on a little further until you come to a large rock. Perform a minor ritual ablution at the edge of the river and two *rak'ats*⁹⁷ of prayer before that rock. Then wait. One of my friends will come before you. Give him my greetings."

And the Shaikh told the darvish some other things to say, because: "He is a very dear friend of mine. He was my companion for seven years."

The darvish set off down the road with the greatest willingness and all along the way he was thinking: "I am going to see and pay a visit to one of the Friends of God, or one of the forty men⁹⁸ who are the cause of the universe's persistence and the order in the affairs of Adam's offspring. When his blessed glance falls on me, all my concerns, in this world and in the world to come, will be provided for by his grace."

When he arrived at the spot the Shaikh had indicated, and did everything the Shaikh had told him, he waited there a while. Then a shattering noise arose in the mountain, such that the mountain began to tremble in terror. The darvish looked up and beheld an enormous black dragon. He had never seen or heard of a bigger one. Its form filled the entire space between the two slopes of the mountain. When the darvish beheld this sight, his vital spirit left him and all his limbs went limp. As much as he wished, he was unable to make the slightest movement. He lost consciousness and fell to the ground.

The dragon slowly approached the rock and facing towards the darvish, laid its head down on a rock in humility and came to a halt. When a moment had gone by and the darvish recovered himself a bit, he saw that the dragon had halted and was motionless. In a state of confusion and extreme fear, he said: "The Shaikh sends his greetings!"

Thereupon, the dragon rubbed its face in the earth and humbled itself. Tears flowed from its eyes. When the darvish beheld its humility and tears and saw that it wasn't attacking him, he realized

that the Shaikh's message was intended for the dragon and he told it what the Shaikh had said.

The dragon made a display of extreme humility. It rubbed its face on the ground and wept so much that the spot where it had placed its head, became drenched.

When the darvish said all he had to say, the dragon departed. As soon as it was no longer in view, the darvish came back to his senses. Once again he fell down in a swoon and it was some time before he regained his wits and rose to his feet.

Then, humbled and hesitant, he slowly came down from the mountain. When he'd walked a little way, he sat down and picking up a rock, he pulled off and broke all the bits of iron that were on his shoes. Then he went on quietly to the *kānaqāh*.

He entered the *kānaqāh* in such a way that no one noticed he'd come in. And he said "salaam" so gently that the companions could scarcely hear his voice.

When the spiritual masters beheld his present state, they were eager to know which *pir* the Shaikh had sent him to visit. Indeed, so great was the impression on the darvish that even several lifetimes of self-mortification and austerities and association with kind *pirs* could not have resulted in such good manners and refinement -- and that after half a day's association with the *pir* and attendance upon him.

They asked the darvish: "Who did the Shaikh send you to?"

He told them the whole story and the group was amazed. The spiritual masters asked the Shaikh about this matter and our Shaikh replied: "Yes, he was my companion for seven years and in one another's company we attained moments of relief and comfort."

After that day, no one ever saw that darvish commit a coarse act or heard him make a loud sound. Nothing of his former disturbing behavior remained. Through one glance of attention from the Shaikh, he became polite and refined.

* * *

Ostād 'Abd al-Rahmān, who was our Shaikh's Qor'ānic reciter, has related:

"One day our Shaikh was speaking before an assembly in Nishapur and there was an 'Alavi⁹⁹ present in the audience. The thought occurred to the 'Alavi: 'I possess family lineage but it is the Shaikh who has prestige and good fortune.'

Book Two, Chapter One

The Shaikh immediately turned to the 'Alavi and said: 'You have to do better than that! You have to do better than that!'

Then addressing the audience, the Shaikh said: 'Do you know what this sayyed is saying? He says: "I possess family lineage but good fortune and prestige are the Shaikh's."

Know that whatever Moḥammad, *God's blessings be upon him*, achieved, he achieved by attachment not by lineage¹⁰⁰, for Bu Jahl and Bu Lahab¹⁰¹ both had the same lineage as the Prophet. You have been content to have a family connection with that great chief, while I have given all of myself in attachment to that great chief. And I have still not become content. Consequently, some of the good fortune and prestige which that great chief possessed, he has allotted to me, thereby indicating that:

"The road leading to my presence consists of attachment and not of family lineage.""

* * *

My grandfather, Šeyk al-Eslām Abu Sa'd, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"One day our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Nishapur. A distinguished jurist¹⁰² was present in the audience. The thought crossed his mind: 'What this man says is not found in the seven sections¹⁰³ of the Qor'ān.'

The Shaikh immediately turned to the jurist and said: 'Oh learned sir, what you are thinking is not hidden from me. What I am saying is found in the eighth of the seven sections of the Qor'ān.'

The jurist asked: 'Which is the eighth of the seven sections?'

The Shaikh replied: The seven sections are referred to in the verse:

"*Oh Prophet, make known what has been sent down unto you.*"¹⁰⁴

And the eighth of the seven sections is this:

"*And He revealed to His servant that which He revealed.*"¹⁰⁵

You imagine that the words of God, *mighty is His glory*, are confined and limited in number.

"Verily, there is no limit to the Word of God!"

What was sent down to Moḥammad, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, consists of the Qor'ān's seven sections. However, what He sends into the hearts of His servants knows no number or limit and is never cut off.

Every instant a messenger is sent into the heart of His servants in accordance with what the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has said:

"Take heed of the insight¹⁰⁶ of the true believer, for he sees with the light of God."

And the Shaikh recited:

**'You are my life's delight. This comes from sight,
Not from reports. Having seen, who wants reports?'**

Then the Shaikh said: 'It is reported in a Tradition:

'The width of the Preserved Tablet¹⁰⁷ is such that though you set out at a gallop on a swift Arabian thoroughbred, you couldn't cross from one side to the other in four thousand years. From that whole tablet, a single line of writing thinner than a hair has been revealed. From Adam until the resurrection, all men will remain engaged with that. No one knows anything of the rest.

***God is all-knowing!*"**

* * *

During the time our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, there were those who disapproved of him. One from among that number was Qāzi Ṣā'ed¹⁰⁸, who has been mentioned earlier. Although he didn't show any disapproval of the Shaikh openly, nonetheless, since the adherents of the Ḥanafī school of law deny the miraculous powers of the Friends and Qāzi Ṣā'ed was the chief and leader of the school, his denial of the miraculous powers of the Friends was all the more intense and would not depart from his heart.

He was informed: "Bu Sa'id says: 'If the whole world were covered with undiluted blood¹⁰⁹, I would eat only what is licit.'"

Book Two, Chapter One

One day Qāzi Šā'ed said to himself: "Today I will test this man."

And he ordered two similar fat sheep to be brought -- such that no one could tell the difference between them. But one he paid for with honest money and the other with unclean money. Both sheep were prepared and roasted the same way. And they were placed on two trays and wrapped up together. Then the qāzi said: "I will go to visit the Shaikh. Once I've entered and sat there awhile, bring these roast sheep in and place them before Shaikh Bu Sa'id. We shall see whether or not his miraculous gifts can distinguish the licit sheep from the illicit one."

As soon as Qāzi Šā'ed went in to see the Shaikh, the servants carrying the two sheep on their head, set out. When they reached the crossroads, some Turkish *ḡolāms*¹¹⁰, who were drunk, met them. The Turks, making use of their whips, beat the qāzi's men and stole the sheep that was illicit.

Then the servants entered the *kānaqāh* bearing one roast sheep, and put it down before the Shaikh. Qāzi Šā'ed looked at them in anger and his bile was aroused within him.

The Shaikh turned to Qāzi Šā'ed and exclaimed: "Oh Qāzi, a carcass is fit for dogs and dogs deserve only a carcass. Those who eat what is illicit, have carried off the illicit and the licit has come to those who eat what is licit. So don't go getting your bile aroused!"

Qāzi Šā'ed's state changed. With regard to his interior denial of the Shaikh's miraculous powers, he repented. He sought our Shaikh's pardon and asked for forgiveness. When he left the Shaikh's presence, he was a firm believer in the Shaikh.

* * *

When our Shaikh was residing in Nishapur, a merchant brought the Shaikh a jar of aloes-wood and one thousand Nishapuri gold dinars. The Shaikh ordered Ḥasan to arrange a banquet and, as was his custom, the Shaikh spent the thousand gold dinars on the banquet.

An oven was brought and the Shaikh ordered that the jar of aloes-wood be placed inside the oven -- all of it at once. While they were burning the aloes-wood, the Shaikh said: "Let my neighbors have a share of this pleasant scent."

And he ordered many candles to be lit during the daytime.

Those days there was a domineering censor¹¹¹ who was a Hanafite and disapproved very strongly of the Shaikh and the Sufis. This censor came into the *kānaqāh* and said to the Shaikh: "What is this you're doing? It is extravagance to light candles during the daytime and to burn a whole jar of aloes-wood in the oven. Who has done this? This is prohibited by religious law."

The Shaikh said: "I didn't realize that this is prohibited by religious law. Go and put out the candles!"

The censor went and stood before one of the candles and blew on it to put it out. The censor's beard and hair and clothing went up in flames and the greater part was burnt.

The Shaikh recited:

"Whatever candle God Himself has lit,
Will burn your whiskers if you blow on it."

The censor fell at the Shaikh's feet and repented.

* * *

There was a darvish in Nishapur who had a strong inclination for this world. He was continually acquiring goods and was greedy to accumulate and hoard them. One night a thief came into his house and stole everything that was there. All that remained was the patched cloak the darvish was wearing and some cash which he had sewn inside the garment.

The following day, when he rose, he was very upset. But he said nothing to anyone and went to the Shaikh's assembly. In the midst of his discourse, the Shaikh turned to the darvish and said: "Oh darvish,

Ah yes my love, I was on your roof last night!
You said: 'It's a thief. It was no thief. It was I.'"

The darvish began to shout and coming before the Shaikh, he placed the cash which was left, in front of the Shaikh.

The Shaikh said: "This is how a darvish ought to be. Nothing is given to you!"

* * *

A certain Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem-e Rubāhi lived in Nishapur. He was one of the great Sufis and the spiritual leader of ten darvishes who were famous Sufis themselves. They were disciples of Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri.

When the Shaikh came to Nishapur, all ten attended his assembly and thereafter remained in his service, having joined the ranks of the Shaikh's disciples.

Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem-e Rubāhi has related:

"For a long time I beseeched God, *He is sublime and exalted*: 'Oh Lord, make known to me Shaikh Bu Sa'id's spiritual rank.'

Nights, absorbed in this thought, I wept and entreated God. Finally, one night I saw the Prophet in a dream -- *God's blessings and peace be upon him!* He was wearing a ring on his right hand and set in the ring was a gem of turquoise. He said to me: 'You wish to know the rank of Shaikh Bu Sa'id?'

I replied: 'Indeed I do, oh Prophet of God!'

He pointed at his finger and said: 'He is like the gem in this ring.'

I let out a shout and I woke from the dream. The following day I attended the Shaikh's assembly and sat to one side. The Shaikh, in the midst of his discourse, turned to me and said: 'What of the story about that ring?'

I let out a shout and lost consciousness. An ecstatic state came over the assembly."

* * *

I have seen the following written in the hand of K^Vāja Abu'l-Barakāt:

"I heard from K^Vāja Esmā'il-e 'Abbās who has related:

'Bu 'Oşmān-e Hiri¹¹² was one of the men of distinction in Nishapur and he resided in the quarter of Molqābād. When our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Nishapur, Bu 'Oşmān became one of our Shaikh's devotees. In his own *kānaqāh* in Molqābād, he arranged to have the Shaikh speak before an assembly and then requested that the Shaikh come to his *kānaqāh* to give a discourse once every week. And the Shaikh consented.

After the Shaikh had discoursed before the assembly, Bu ‘Osmān related: "One night I dreamed the Shaikh was speaking before a gathering in my *kānaqāh* and the Bearer of the Law, Moḥammad-e Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, was seated in the audience to one side of the pulpit. However, the Shaikh didn't look at him.

It passed through my mind: 'How strange that the Shaikh is not looking at the Bearer of the Law – *God's blessings and peace be upon him!*'

The Shaikh immediately turned to me and said:

'This is not the moment to look at other than Him. This is the moment of unveiling and ecstatic contemplation.'

When the Shaikh finished his discourse and brought the assembly to a close, he turned to the Bearer of the Law, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, and said:

*"It has been revealed unto you and all who came before you, that if you set up partners with God, your acts shall be in vain."*¹¹³

God's blessings and peace be upon Moḥammad and his family, one and all.'

And the Shaikh drew his hand over his face¹¹⁴ and came down from the pulpit. At that I woke up."'''

* * *

Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. Aḥmad, the Preacher of Saraks, has related:

"After our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's death, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, I composed an ode on his behalf and praised his noble sanctuary and sanctified sepulchral shrine. In that ode I included these two couplets:

'Here's why a man said the True resides in space.
He was confused because you're here in space.
For mankind's sake God made you appear in space
Because outside of space men lack understanding.'

When I recited this ode at the tomb of the Shaikh in the presence of the Shaikh's offspring and disciples, Shaikh 'Abd al-Şamad b. Hasan al-Qalānesi, the Sufi of Saraks, who was an intimate disciple of the Shaikh and one of his ten foremost companions, was present and he said: 'Listen to the following story which confirms the truth of these two couplets.'

Then before the purified tomb and in the presence of those gathered there, he went on to relate:

'I was in attendance upon the Shaikh in Nishapur. One night I dreamed the Shaikh was sitting in a place where it was not his habit to sit. I asked him: "Oh Shaikh, why aren't you sitting in your own place?"

He replied: "I am in my own place."

I addressed the Shaikh once more, saying: "I beg your pardon, oh Shaikh, but you haven't sat in your own place."

The Shaikh replied: "I have no place, neither above nor below, not to the right nor to the left, not in any direction. I am here abiding in space for the good of mankind and in order to look after men's needs and see that their affairs turn out for the best."

I woke up and began reciting devotional prayers.

That morning I was sitting in the assembly, when the Shaikh came out of his cell of seclusion and sat upon the raised platform.

For a moment, as was his custom, the Shaikh lowered his head. Then raising his head, he said: "Oh 'Abd al-Şamad, come tell us about the dream you had last night. Tell us just what you saw."

I was overcome with amazement, for I had not mentioned my dream to a single creature.

I brought my head close to the Shaikh's ear and started to tell him about the dream in a whisper, endeavoring to keep anyone else from hearing. I had scarcely begun, when the Shaikh said in a loud voice: "Speak up, so that people may hear how I am residing in their space for the sake of fulfilling their needs. Otherwise, I have no space."

I let out a shout and speaking in a loud voice, told my dream to the people. When they heard it, the people in the gathering began to weep and experienced an ecstatic state.

Now, after his death, the Shaikh's miraculous power has inspired you to utter these two couplets."

* * *

Hasan-e Mo'addeb has recounted:

"One day in Nishapur when our Shaikh Abu Saʿid, God sanctify his awesome soul, had finished speaking before an assembly and the people had gone, I stood in attendance upon him, as was usual. I had accumulated large debts and was worried because the creditors were making demands and there was nothing in the way of 'means'. I wanted the Shaikh to say a word about this but he hadn't said anything.

Now pointing, the Shaikh said: 'Look behind you!'

I looked and saw an old lady who was entering the *kānaqāh*. I went before her and she gave me a heavy purse, saying: 'Here are one hundred gold dinars. Bring this before the Shaikh and ask him to invoke God on my behalf.'

I left her and was filled with joy, thinking: 'Now I will pay off the debts.'

I brought the money to the Shaikh and put it down in front of him. The Shaikh said: 'Don't put that down here! Take it and go to the cemetery of Ḥira. There you will find a half ruined cupola. Go inside. An old man is sleeping there. Convey my greetings to him and give him this gold. And tell him: "When this is finished, come to me and I will give you more."

I shall wait here until you return."

Ḥasan goes on to relate:

"I set out and entered the place which the Shaikh had indicated. I saw a very feeble old man, asleep with his head resting on a *tambur*¹¹⁵. I woke him and delivered the Shaikh's greetings and gave him the gold.

The man let out a cry and said: 'Take me to the Shaikh!'

I asked: 'What is your story?'

He replied: 'I am such a man as you see. My profession is playing the *tambur*. When I was young, the people held me in great esteem. Nowhere in this city did two people gather without me being the third person in their company and I had many pupils.

Now that I have grown old, everything has changed. No one invites me anywhere. Now that there is a scarcity of bread and since I know no other work, my wife and children have said to me: "We can't keep you. Leave us to divine providence!"

Thus, they put me out of the house. I knew of no place where I could go. I entered this cemetery and wept in pain and beseeched God, *He is sanctified and exalted*, saying: "Oh Lord, I know no profession and my youth and my force are gone. All men have rejected me. Even my wife and children have turned me out. Now

there is only You and I, and I and You! Tonight I will perform for You, that You may provide my bread."

I went on playing until dawn and I wept all the while. When the call to morning prayer was raised, I was thoroughly exhausted. I fell to the ground and slept until this moment when you woke me."

Hasan goes on to relate:

"With the old man, I returned to the Shaikh, who was sitting in the same place. The old man fell at the feet of the Shaikh and grasped the Shaikh's hands and repented. The Shaikh exclaimed: 'Oh generous fellow, you addressed God from out of a ruin in a state of want, poverty and destitution, and He has not abandoned you. Go and continue to speak with Him and spend this money.'¹¹⁶

Then the Shaikh turned to me and said: 'Oh Hasan, no one has suffered loss in his dealings with God. What he had need of has arrived. What you have need of will also appear.'"

Hasan has related:

"The next day when the Shaikh finished speaking before an assembly, a certain person came and presented me with two hundred dinars, saying: 'Bring this to the Shaikh.'

The Shaikh ordered: 'Use this for the debts.'

I spent the money for that purpose and my heart was freed from concern for the debts.

* * *

Hasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has also related:

"Once in Nishapur I had contracted heavy debts on behalf of the Sufis and I was biding my time, waiting to see what the Shaikh would order, for there was no need to tell him.

One day after we had performed the morning prayers, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Hasan, bring me the inkstand and a piece of paper.'

I exclaimed: '*God is great!*'

I brought the inkstand and the paper before the Shaikh and he wrote out:

'Men till the earth with two oxen and an ass.
Go to Marv or go to Herat, it matters not!'

Then he told me: 'Take this paper and as you go out the *kāna-qāh* door, turn right and walk on. Then give this to whomever you meet.'

I did just as the Shaikh had ordered and a young man came before me. I greeted him with 'salaam' and he returned my greeting. Then I gave him the Shaikh's greetings and handed him the piece of paper. He kissed it and pressed it to his eyes. But it was dark and he couldn't read it.

We walked on until we came to the entrance of a bathhouse and the young man went inside and read what was written. It was the answer to his problem. He said: 'Take me to the Shaikh!'

I brought him before the Shaikh. Greeting the Shaikh with 'salaam', he placed before him one hundred gold dinars, a pouch of musk and a piece of aloes-wood. The Shaikh said: 'Don't worry your heart. Even here your goal will be attained.'

When the young man came outside, he said to me: 'Come with me.'

I went with him. We entered the caravanserai and he counted out another one hundred dinars and gave them to me, saying: 'Spend this to pay off the Shaikh's debts. And if I attain my goal here, I will give you another hundred dinars.'

I asked: 'What is your difficulty?'

He replied: 'I have one partner who is in Bolgār¹¹⁷ and another partner in Nahravāla¹¹⁸. They've been gone three years. Last night a messenger came to me from Marv to tell me that one of my partners has arrived in Marv. I decided to set out for Marv. That same night another messenger arrived to tell me my other partner had reached Herat.

All night I debated with myself whether to go to Marv or Herat. Towards dawn the thought occurred to me: "I will go to Shaikh Bu Sa'id in the morning and give him one hundred gold dinars and some incense and ask him whether I should go to Marv or Herat. I will set out for whichever place the Shaikh indicates."

This morning I was on my way to see the Shaikh, when you met me and gave me the piece of paper. Now since the Shaikh says I shall attain my goal right here and my heart will be set at rest, I will wait and see what happens."

Hasan goes on to relate¹¹⁹:

"After the noonday prayers I met the young man and he said: 'My partner who was in Herat, has arrived.'

When the afternoon prayers were over, I went out to the bazaar and saw the young fellow. He came running up to me and

Book Two, Chapter One

said: 'My other partner has arrived from Marv. Come with me. I have been looking for you. Just as the Shaikh predicted, my goal has been attained right here!'

He counted out one hundred dinars and gave them to me. I went before the Shaikh and told him. The Shaikh said: 'Pay off the debts with these three hundred dinars. And after this don't fall into disagreement. Whatever the darvish community eats, is no matter for disagreement. It is God, *magnificent is His glory and His dignity*, Who sees to the cost of it.'

* * *

Hasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"For several days I had not brought any meat to the *kānaqāh*, for I had no way to pay for it. Meanwhile, the darvishes were demanding meat.

One day while our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly, he said to me: 'Oh Hasan, rise and go before that young man.'

And the Shaikh pointed with his finger.

I went to the young man and the Shaikh said: 'Oh young fellow, give him the gold coin you have fastened on your belt -- which is worth one dinar and a *ḥabba*¹²⁰.'

The youth took hold of his belt and gave me the coin. When I brought the coin to the Shaikh, he said: 'Go to the neighborhood of Aspris. You will find a young butcher there, holding in his hands a fattened lamb that he's taken much trouble over. Buy it for a dinar and then go with him to the dunghill and throw the lamb into the rubbish pit there, so that the beasts of that pit may grease their jaws with it.'

I set out and all along the way I was harboring disapproval within myself, thinking: 'For several days there's been no meat in the *kānaqāh* and the Shaikh is throwing a specially raised, fattened lamb to the dogs!'

When I arrived at Aspris, it was just as the Shaikh had said. I asked about buying the lamb and the butcher said: 'Though I'm offered five and a half *dāngs*¹²¹, I won't sell it for less than one dinar!'

I gave him the coin I had and bought the lamb. Then taking the young butcher with me, I threw the lamb to the dogs. A crowd stood there, watching what I was doing. Then the young man broke into tears and said: 'Take me to the Shaikh.'

When I brought him before the Shaikh, he fell at the Shaikh's feet and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I have repented.'

I was standing in the Shaikh's presence and the Shaikh said to me: 'Oh Ḥasan, for four months now this young man has taken a lot of trouble over that lamb. Last night the lamb died but the young man refused to throw it away. I could not allow this carcass to reach the mouth of a Muslim.'

This man has attained his goal. Moreover, those dogs have greased their bellies. Why then should you harbor disapproval?

These darvishes are pure and eat nothing but what is pure. What is meant for them shall arrive.'

The young man who had given the gold coin, was still sitting there. He was a Kurd¹²² and a shepherd. He rose to his feet and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I possess licit sheep. I will give twenty castrated sheep on behalf of the Sufis.'

The Shaikh said: 'All this was necessary, so that first the dogs could grease their jaws and this man could attain his goal, and then you could have licit meat.'

* * *

While our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, one night towards dawn the muezzin of the Motarrez Mosque recited verses of the Qor'ān from the minaret. There was a sick Turk in that neighborhood. The Turk experienced an ecstatic state listening to the muezzin's voice and wept profusely.

When it was day, he sent someone to summon the muezzin. He asked him: "Was it you who recited Qor'ānic verses from the minaret last night?"

The muezzin said yes. The Turk said: "Recite for me again."

The muezzin declaimed five verses. The Turk gave him two gold coins to keep. Having left the Turk's house, the muezzin went to attend the Shaikh's assembly.

While the Shaikh was speaking before the assembly, two dog keepers entered the *kānaqāh* and asked the Shaikh to give them a gift.

The Shaikh looked at the muezzin and said: "Give the two gold coins you just received from the Turk, to these two persons."

The muezzin thought to himself: "The Turk was alone when he gave me the gold coins. Nobody else was present. How did the Shaikh know of this?"

Book Two, Chapter One

While he was thinking, the Shaikh said: "Don't think about this too long. Water from the bathhouse is fit for the sewer!"¹²³

A flush of joy came over the muezzin and he gave them the gold coins.

* * *

Hasan, *God have mercy on him*, has also related:

"In Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said to me: 'Go outside and turn to the right. Whomever you meet, put out your hand and tell him to place in it whatever he possesses.'

In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions I went outside and began walking. I saw a Zoroastrian. I went up to him and held out my hand. And I kept my innermost heart fixed on God.

The Zoroastrian said: 'First, I want to become a Muslim. Take me to the Shaikh!'

I took him before the Shaikh and he said: 'Oh Shaikh, introduce me to Islam.'

He became a Muslim and everything he possessed, he dedicated to God and spent on behalf of the Sufis."

* * *

One day in Nishapur, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, called Hasan-e Mo'addeb and said: "You must go to Mosabbekh-e Naqib¹²⁴ and tell him to provide dinner for the darvishes."

This was the chief of police of Nishapur and he was extremely cruel. Moreover, he disapproved of the darvishes and was an enemy of the Shaikh.

Hasan relates:

"I set out and all along the way I was saying to myself: 'There is no one in Nishapur who is more cruel, or more opposed to the Shaikh. How is this going to turn out?'

When I approached Mosabbekh-e Naqib, I saw that he was beating someone and a crowd was looking on from a distance. I stood there in perplexity.

Suddenly the chief of police caught sight of me. He exclaimed: 'What's that Sufi doing here?'

Someone came and questioned me. I walked up to the chief of police and gave him the Shaikh's greetings, adding: 'The Shaikh says that you should provide dinner for the Sufis!'

He made several remarks by way of mockery. But then, extending his hand, he picked up a purse of money and threw it towards me, saying: 'Perhaps the Shaikh would like to offer a dinner that's paid for with illicit money? Tell your Shaikh I've just taken this money from a man I beat about the head and chest with a stick.'

I picked up the money and brought it before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: 'Take this and buy meat and sweets and arrange whatever is necessary for dinner.'

The darvishes were amazed by his behavior and disapproved. I went off and bought everything that was required.

When it was time for dinner, I set out the meal. The Shaikh reached forth his hand and began to partake of the food and the group ate with him, although they disapproved.

The following day the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly. In the midst of the discourse, a young man rose to his feet and came before the Shaikh. He was weeping and kissed the Shaikh's feet. He said: 'Oh Shaikh, I have repented. Forgive me! I have betrayed you and indeed, I have been punished for it.'

And he placed a purse of silver before the Shaikh.

The Shaikh said: 'Tell these people what betrayal you have committed.'

He went on: 'When my father was on the verge of death, he called me and gave me two purses of silver, saying: "After my death, take this silver to the Shaikh of Meyhana that he may spend it on behalf of the darvishes."

When my father died, I was waylaid by Satan. I said to myself: "It's better to spend the money on myself than give it to the Shaikh, for it is my rightful inheritance."

The chief of police arrested me on a false accusation, struck me a hundred blows with his stick, and took away one of the purses of silver.

I was still there when your servant came and delivered your message. The chief of police gave him the money. That money is your money. And behold, I have brought the other purse. Forgive me for what I have done!

The Shaikh said: 'Oh generous fellow, don't worry your heart. This has reached me and that was destined for you.'

Book Two, Chapter One

Then the Shaikh turned to the group of darvishes and said: 'Nothing other than what is licit comes to this group.'

News of this reached Mosabbēh-e Naqib. He came before the Shaikh and fell at the Shaikh's feet. He abandoned his cruelty and became a devotee of the Shaikh and a firm supporter of the mystic community. Thus, the people at large escaped from his oppression."

* * *

It has been related that during the period our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, two well-known persons said to one another: "We should test the Shaikh to see whether he really has miraculous gifts or not. Let's go before the Shaikh and get him to give us something and then spend it on a *harisa* stew¹²⁵."

Having made up a story, they went before the Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, there's a young girl in our neighborhood who has neither mother, nor father. We have arranged a husband for her and have asked everyone to donate all the things she needs. This day the matter has been settled and we are escorting her to her husband's house tonight.

Candles are required so that she may proceed to her husband's house in the radiant light of the Shaikh, and their life together may benefit from such a blessing."

The Shaikh called Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and said: "Oh Ḥasan, bring two big, heavy candles and give them to these men, for *harisa* is expensive."

When the two men heard these words, they lost their self-control. They rubbed their faces on the Shaikh's feet and repented of their disbelief. They remained in attendance upon the Shaikh and were ever after in the company of Sufis and became men of piety.

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh had fallen ill and a doctor was brought to look at him. It so happened that the doctor was a Zoroastrian.

When the doctor arrived and had sat down, he wanted to take the Shaikh's pulse. The Shaikh summoned Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and said: "Oh Ḥasan, bring a pair of scissors and clip his nails and trim his mustache¹²⁶. Wrap the parings in a paper and give it to him,

for it is their custom not to throw these things away. And bring some water for him to wash his hands."

The Zoroastrian looked on in astonishment but didn't have the nerve to act otherwise.

When the Shaikh's orders had been carried out, the doctor placed his hand on the Shaikh's hand. The Shaikh turned his hand over and clasped the doctor's hand. He held his hand like that for a moment and then let go of it.

The doctor rose to his feet, intending to leave. He reached the door of the *kānaqāh* but then he turned and looked back.

The Shaikh called out: "How many times will you look back? You won't be allowed to leave!"

The Zoroastrian returned and came before the Shaikh. He became a Muslim and all the members of his family embraced the faith as well -- due to the blessing of the Shaikh's glance.

* * *

Pir Bu Şāleh-e Dandāni was a disciple of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He looked after the Shaikh's toothpick and he was continually standing in attendance upon the Shaikh with a pair of scissors in his hand. Whenever our Shaikh glanced at his robe and noticed there was fluff on it and wanted to pick it off with his fingers, Pir Bu Şāleh would immediately remove it with the scissors. For the Shaikh was so deeply immersed in the Higher Presence, he did not wish to be absent from that Presence the amount of time it took to glance repeatedly at his robe. And it was Bu Şāleh who trimmed the Shaikh's mustache.

A darvish has related: "I said to Pir Bu Şāleh: 'Teach me how to trim a mustache.'

He laughed and replied: 'Oh darvish, you need learning equivalent to that of seventy religious scholars to be able to trim a darvish's mustache! It's not as easy as all that.'"

.....

This Pir Bu Şāleh has related:

"Towards the end of his life the Shaikh only had one tooth left. Every night when he had finished his meal, before getting up he would take his toothpick from me and work it around the tooth. And when he washed his hands, he would rinse the toothpick with water and then put it aside.

Book Two, Chapter One

One night when the Shaikh took his toothpick, due to the pleasure men derive from criticizing everyone, the thought occurred in my heart: 'The Shaikh has no teeth and doesn't need a toothpick. Why does he ask me for his toothpick every night?'

Raising his head, the Shaikh looked at me and said: 'In order to act in accordance with Custom (*Sunnat*) and to acquire divine mercy. For the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

"God have mercy on those of my community who avail themselves of the toothpick during their ablutions and after meals!"

I was made aware of my error. I broke into tears hearing this Tradition (*ḥadis*)."

* * *

It has been related that while our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, he sent K^Vāja 'Aliyak-e Dar-e 'Azra¹²⁷ – who was one of the Shaikh's intimate disciples and the Shaikh was extremely fond of him -- and K^Vāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to Meyhana on an important errand. K^Vāja 'Aliyak has related:

"When we arrived in Nowqān¹²⁸, Ḥasan said: 'Let's go to visit K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān¹²⁹ and hear him speak.'"

.....

And this k^Vāja imam was a personage of great distinction.

.....

K^Vāja 'Aliyak has related:

"I replied: 'The Shaikh has sent us to Meyhana. We can't leave our route to go somewhere else.'

Ḥasan talked much in favor of going but it was of no avail. We went on to Meyhana and settled the important matter the Shaikh had ordered. On our return when we reached Nowqān, Ḥasan said: 'I'm going to see K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar. You should come with me but if you don't, I'll go and see him by myself.'

I accompanied Ḥasan, since I knew he could not be deterred. When we went before K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar, he received us with respect. We sat down and he began to speak. K^Vāja Ḥasan-e

Mo'addeb listened to him carefully. His heart inclined towards the k^vāja imam's words.

When K^vāja Imam Moẓaffar finished his discourse and began to speak on another subject, Ḥasan resolved in his heart to remain there. When K^vāja Imam Moẓaffar finished speaking, I said: 'This discourse you give by way of conclusion, is where our Shaikh's discourse begins!'

K^vāja Imam Moẓaffar was thrown into consternation and Ḥasan came back to his senses. We rose to our feet and leaving the k^vāja imam's presence, went outside.

When we reached our next halting station, Ḥasan confided to me: 'What an idea came over me! But when I heard your remark, the idea vanished and I realized I'd made a mistake.'

When we arrived in Nishapur and entered the kānaqāh, the Shaikh caught sight of us. Looking at Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, he said: 'That man would have filled up your word bag, if 'Aliyak hadn't turned it upside down!'

Ḥasan fell to the ground and sought forgiveness."

* * *

During the time our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, K^vāja Bu Mansūr-e Varqāni¹³⁰, the vezier of Sultan Ṭoġrel¹³¹, fell ill. When the end was drawing near, he summoned our Shaikh and Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, *God sanctify both their souls*, and said:

"I have loved you dearly and spent much money on your behalf. Now I have one request to make of you. When I pass away, I would like both of you great men to be present at my funeral and to stay by my tomb until, with your help, I have undergone the interrogation¹³².

Both men agreed to do so.

When the vezier passed over to the mercy of God, *He is sublime*, our Shaikh, along with Ostād Imam, set out to comply with his request.

When they arrived at the graveyard, the grave had still not been dug. Ostād Imam said to our Shaikh: "They haven't finished digging the grave yet and it's hot. You wait here, while I see that the people return to the city."

The Shaikh's prayer-rug was spread out for him alongside the grave, and he sat down. When the grave was ready, they buried

Book Two, Chapter One

Kvāja Bu Maṣṣur and covered the grave. The Shaikh rose to his feet and said: "It is done!"

And then he left.

When he met Ostād Imam, Ostād said: "Let us see to that last wish which the kvāja made."

The Shaikh replied: "There was no need to do anything."

And the people present began to talk, wondering what the vezier's last wish had been.

Ostād Imam asked: "Oh Shaikh, what happened?"

Our Shaikh said: "The Two Envoys¹³³ arrived and began the interrogation. Then one of them said to the other: 'Don't you see who's there at his grave?'

That's all he said and then they both left. When they had gone, I got up and left as well."

* * *

Ebrāhim Ināl¹³⁴, the younger brother of Sultan Toğrel, was the chief of police of Nishapur. And he was wicked in the extreme and very tyrannical. At every one of the Shaikh's assemblies the people of Nishapur asked our Shaikh to invoke God against Ebrāhim. The Shaikh did not invoke God against him but said Ebrāhim would become good.

Then one Friday when the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly, Ebrāhim Ināl came to the assembly and wept profusely. When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close, Ebrāhim Ināl came and stood in front of the Shaikh's raised platform. The Shaikh asked: "What is it?"

Ebrāhim said: "Accept me!"

The Shaikh answered: "It's not what you require."

Ebrāhim said: "I require it!"

The Shaikh answered: "It's not what you require."

He said: "I require it!"

When Ebrāhim had repeated himself three times, the Shaikh gazed at him with a stern look and said: "You will lose your wealth."

Ebrāhim said: "So be it!"

The Shaikh said: "Your rank of prince will be lost."

Ebrāhim replied: "So be it!"

The Shaikh added: "You will lose your life."

Ebrāhim replied: "Let it be so!"

The Shaikh ordered: "Bring the inkstand and a piece of paper."

Ḥasan brought the inkstand and a piece of paper before the Shaikh and the Shaikh wrote:

"Ebrāhim is one of us. Fazlollāh b. Abi'l-Keyr al-Meyhani has written this."

Ebrāhim Ināl took the piece of paper, kissed it and tucked it under his belt. Then he left. That very night he departed for Iraq¹³⁵, installed himself in Hamadān and proclaimed open rebellion.

Sultan Ṭoğrel set out and waged war against him and captured him. Ebrāhim was his younger brother and had been very wicked. He sent a message to the sultan, saying: "I know you are going to kill me. The only favor I ask of you is that after my execution when you bury me, place in my hand a certain paper. The paper is in my pouch and bears writing by Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr.

Shaikh Bu Sa'id foretold to me each of the three events which have happened. I said let it be. Since I have his writing with me, tomorrow I shall resort to him for support."

* * *

It has been related that one day in Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was coming from somewhere accompanied, as usual, by a group of Sufis and had reached 'Adani Kuyān Street. There was a butcher on the street. When the Shaikh and the group went past him, the old butcher said to himself:

"Oh, their mothers and wives! What a bunch of ridiculous buffoons. Look at the head and the neck on them! Like the tail of a well-fed sheep..."

And he uttered ugly insults against the Shaikh and the Sufis but no one heard him. The Shaikh, however, by virtue of his clairvoyance, was aware of this. The Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Oh Ḥasan, bring that old butcher here."

Ḥasan went back and said to the man: "Come along. The Shaikh summons you."

The old man took fright and as he approached, he was trembling and apprehensive. The Shaikh sent a Sufi to Ḥasan to say: "Send the man to the bath."

Book Two, Chapter One

Ḥasan sent him to the bath and came before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "Go to the bazaar and buy a piece of fine cotton, a pair of shoes and a linen turban from Ṭabarestān with fringe on it. Then go to the bathhouse and take two Sufis with you to massage the old man inside the bath."

Ḥasan immediately sent two Sufis to the bath to be of service to the man and went himself to the bazaar and brought back what the Shaikh had ordered. The Shaikh said to the Sufis: "Sew a shirt and a pair of undertrousers quickly."

The Sufis all gathered together and in an hour they had sewn the garment. The Shaikh said to Ḥasan: "Dress the man in this and give him one hundred dirhems. And tell him: 'Keep on saying the things you were saying before. And when you've spent this money, come to me and I'll give you more.'"

Ḥasan went off and did everything the Shaikh had ordered.

The old man broke into tears and coming before the Shaikh, he repented. He became one of the Shaikh's devotees and a firm supporter of those Sufis.

* * *

The jurist Bu Bakr-e Šowkāni said:

"My father, the jurist Moḥammad, has related: 'During the time I was studying the religious sciences in Nishapur, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was also residing in the city. Every day when my lessons were over, I would go to see the Shaikh.

I would stay with the Shaikh until the afternoon prayers. After performing the afternoon prayers, I would return to the school.

One day, I came before the Shaikh, greeted him with "salaam" and sat down. The Shaikh lifted up a corner of his prayer-rug. Bringing forth a handful of Ṭāyefi raisins from under the prayer-rug, he said: "The Sufis have received a donation. They divided it up and I have kept your shares here. That's seven raisins for each of you -- three sevens."

At school I only had one roommate but the Shaikh gave me three portions of seven. I said thank you and left, and along the way I counted the raisins. There were twenty-one, three times seven, just as the Shaikh had indicated.

When I reached the school, I found that a brother of my companion had arrived from Iraq and was sitting in my room.

I came in, asked after his well-being, and divided up the raisins. Just as the Shaikh had said, each of us received seven raisins!"

* * *

KVāja Imam Abu ‘Ali-ye Fārmadi¹³⁶, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"In the beginning of my youth, I was in Nishapur studying the religious sciences in the Sarrājān School¹³⁷. After a certain time, news spread through the city to the effect that: 'Shaikh Bu Sa‘id-e Bu‘l-Keyr has arrived from Meyhana and is speaking before assemblies. His miraculous powers have been revealed in public, and the people of Nishapur and all the leaders of the schools of religious law have professed their faith in him.'

I went myself to see the Shaikh.

When I set eyes upon his beauty, I conceived a passion for him and my love for the mystic community increased.

Every day I waited for him to come forth and speak before an assembly, so that I could see him. I became one of his attendant companions in secret, imagining that the Shaikh didn't know of me.

Then one day I was sitting in my room in school and a troubling desire to see the Shaikh welled up in my heart. But this wasn't the time when the Shaikh customarily appeared in public. I tried to be patient but I wasn't able. I rose to my feet and went outside.

When I reached the crossroads, I saw the Shaikh going somewhere with a large group. Without knowing what I was doing, I followed after them. They were escorting the Shaikh to a festive gathering. When they arrived at the door of the house, the Shaikh went in and the group went with him. I went in as well and sat down in a corner, in such a way that the Shaikh couldn't see me.

When they began to perform the *samā‘*, an ecstatic state came over the Shaikh. He experienced a flush of joy and tore his robe.

When the *samā‘* was over, the Shaikh took off his robe and it was torn into pieces in front of him. The Shaikh put one of the sleeves and the gore aside and called out: 'Oh Bu ‘Ali of Ṭus, where are you?'

I didn't say anything. I thought to myself: 'The Shaikh doesn't know me and doesn't see me. Maybe one of the Shaikh's disciples is named Bu ‘Ali.'

Once again the Shaikh called out. And I still didn't respond. He called out for the third time.

People in the group said: 'Maybe the Shaikh means you.'

I rose to my feet and went before the Shaikh. He picked up the sleeve and the gore and gave them to me, saying: 'To me you are like this sleeve and the gore.'

I took the pieces of the robe and made obeisance. I put the garment in a place of honor and I constantly came to wait upon the Shaikh. In attendance on the Shaikh I received much illumination and experienced ecstatic states.

.....

When the Shaikh left Nishapur, I frequented Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri and told him of the states I was experiencing. He said: 'My son, apply yourself to studying the religious sciences.'

Every day that illumination went on increasing. Meanwhile, I applied myself to studying for a few more years. Then one day I dipped my pen in the inkwell and it came out clean. I dipped my pen once more and again it came out the same way. I dipped it in the inkwell three times but it always came out clean.

I rose to my feet and went before Ostād Imam and told him what had happened. Ostād Imam said: 'Since learning has released you from its hold, let go your hold on learning. Give yourself over to action and religious devotions.'

I went and transferred my affairs and books from the school to the *kānaqāh* and busied myself waiting upon Ostād Imam.

One day Ostād Imam had gone by himself into the bath. I went and poured out a few buckets of water in the bath.

Ostād came forth, performed his prayers and asked: 'Who was it that poured out the water in the bath?'

I thought to myself: 'Maybe I have committed some impropriety.'

I remained silent. He asked the same question again. I still didn't answer. When he'd asked three times, I replied: 'It was I.'

Ostād said: 'Oh Bu 'Ali, whatever Abu'l-Qāsem has acquired in seventy years, you have acquired with one bucket of water!'¹³⁸

Then for some time I pursued the struggle for spiritual purification under his guidance. One day a certain state came over me and in that state I was lost. The following day I reported this spiritual difficulty to Ostad Imam. He replied: 'Oh Bu 'Ali, this is the limit of my guidance. I have no access to whatever lies beyond this point.'

I thought to myself: 'I need a *pir* who will take me further than this station.'

Meanwhile, the state I was experiencing grew more intense. I had heard the name of Bu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni¹³⁹. I rose to my feet and set out for Ṭus but I didn't know where he was residing. When I arrived in the city, I asked of his whereabouts and was told: 'He resides in the neighborhood of Kanbār, in a mosque with a group of his disciples.'

I went to the mosque and Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem was sitting there. I performed two *rak'ats*¹⁴⁰ of prayer as a greeting to the mosque¹⁴¹ and then went before Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem. He had his head lowered. Raising his head, he said: 'Come, oh Bu 'Ali, tell me what is troubling you.'

Greeting him with 'salaam', I sat down and told him what experiences I had had. Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem remarked: 'Ah yes, this is an auspicious beginning! You have not yet attained a high rank but if you receive training, you will attain a high station.'

I said to myself: 'This is my *pir*.'

I remained with him for quite some time.

Then Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem -- after having ordered me to undertake various forms of self-mortification and spiritual disciplines during this period -- showed me much favor and arranged for me to speak before an assembly. And he gave me his daughter in marriage.

Thereafter my fortunes rose."

.....

Although the above account is far from the purpose of this book, my sole purpose being to describe what happened between Bu 'Ali and the Shaikh and to relate how the Shaikh gave him that robe, nonetheless, having entered into the beginnings of Bu 'Ali's mystic state, I didn't want to leave my description incomplete.

.....

And Kvāja Imam Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi has related:

"During the period that I was before Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem, I had been engaged in ascetic practices and self-mortification and Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem had not yet ordered me to convoke an assembly. Shaikh Bu Sa'id came from Meyhana to Ṭus and I went to see him. When I had made obeisance and greeted the Shaikh, he returned

my greeting and said: 'Oh Bu 'Ali, before long they will have you speaking like a little parrot!'

And shortly thereafter, Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem ordered me to convoke an assembly and in no time at all the gates of eloquent speech opened for me."

And thus, he became famous and well-known.

* * *

KṼāja Imam Bu Naṣr-e 'Eyāzi of Saraks has related:

"I was in Nishapur studying jurisprudence under KṼāja Imam Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni¹⁴². (*God have mercy upon them both!*) For some time I had been diligently studying the branches of religious science, taking dictation on controversies¹⁴³ and the schools of law. Then I heard that Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr had come from Meyhana and was giving good discourses and performing many miracles in public. For the sake of seeing and hearing for myself, I attended his assembly.

When I laid eyes upon the Shaikh, the awesomeness of his glance, his inner purity¹⁴⁴ and the purity of his face inspired reverence in my heart. And when he began to speak, his words made such an impression on me that I said to myself: 'I may have reached a high degree of learning but there is no way I can do without God -- *He is exalted!* And the road to God, *He is exalted*, is what this man is saying. I too must set out on this road and enter the company and service of the Shaikh.'

The Shaikh immediately said from the pulpit: 'You must set out!'

I was overcome with amazement at what the Shaikh said and wondered how he had known my thought. But then I felt some doubt in my heart, thinking this was perhaps a coincidence.

When the Shaikh went on to talk about another subject, once again the same thought entered my mind with overwhelming force. The Shaikh said: "'This affair"¹⁴⁵ will not put up with delay.'

When the Shaikh displayed his miraculous power again, my doubt was removed.

As soon as the assembly was over, I stood up and went back to my school, intending to collect my belongings and return to the Shaikh. While I was gathering my affairs, someone informed KṼāja Imam Bu Moḥammad al-Joveyni of the situation and he immediately came to me and said: 'Where are you off to?'

I described to him what had happened. He said: 'I will not hold you back from the Shaikh's company and service and I will not hinder you from associating with the darvishes. I only have this to say. You went to the Shaikh's assembly and you beheld a man who merits veneration, speaks with eloquence and makes clear display of miraculous powers. Those miraculous powers made an impression in your heart. And you found his mystic state to be superior to your learning. But if you imagine that you can become Shaikh Bu Sa'id, you're mistaken.

You have no idea of the ascetic practices and the self-mortification that the Shaikh undertook. I know what he did to reach the spiritual rank he holds. Moreover, a hundred men might have undertaken the same ascetic disciplines but God, *He is exalted*, would not have given them what He has given the Shaikh.

Through your present desire you will abandon your studies and be deprived of learning, yet still not attain the Shaikh's mystic state.

When I considered these words in all fairness, I realized it was as he said.

My belief in the Shaikh remained firm but I continued to pursue my studies. Meanwhile, I went on visiting the Shaikh constantly and learned many instructive points from him.

The Shaikh bestowed numerous favors upon me and I experienced repose in his company."

* * *

Ostād Esmā'il-e Šābuni¹⁴⁶ has related:

"One night I was sleeping. When it was the appointed hour and time to get up and perform my recitations, as I did every night, my animal soul made me lazy and I remained asleep.

A cat ran by the head of my bed and knocked over a jug of water I had placed there. I uttered an exclamation of surprise but persisted in my laziness. I didn't get up and my eyes remained closed in sleep.

Next, a stone fell from the roof and struck a bowl in the inner courtyard. People in the house jumped up and cried: 'Thief!'

My sleep was disrupted. I got up and began to perform my recitations.

The following morning, I went to the Shaikh's assembly. In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh turned to me and said: 'When God's servant sleeps all night and is late getting up, the cat and

Book Two, Chapter One

mouse are ordered to come and fight at the head of his bed. They knock over his water jug to make him wake up and he utters an exclamation of surprise. A thief is ordered to throw a stone into the house and it strikes a bowl. People say it was a thief. But word comes: "It was not! That was our messenger, sent to wake you up so that you would talk to us a while."

Oh moon-faced idol, last night I was on your roof.
You cried: 'A thief!' That was no thief. It was I.'

When the Shaikh said these words, tears welled up in my eyes and I lost consciousness. I realized that, no matter what the circumstances, the Shaikh never neglects us but is always with us."

* * *

Kvāja Bu'l-Fath, the Shaikh's grandson, said:

"Pir Musā has recounted: 'One day in Nishapur Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said to me: "Stand in front of us and perform two *rak'ats*¹⁴⁷ of prayer so that we may follow you. And recite every praise of God that occurs in the Qor'ān."

Pir Musā has related: 'I was perplexed, not knowing how I could accomplish this. In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, I stepped to the front. When I had pronounced "*God is great!*"¹⁴⁸, every praise of God that is in the Qor'ān flowed forth upon my tongue.

When we had performed the prayers, the Shaikh said: "Oh Musā, I was incapable of offering up thanks to God -- *He is exalted!* You have acted as my deputy. May God, *He is exalted*, bestow bounty upon you -- *for the sake of Moḥammad and Moḥammad's family!*"

* * *

Bu Bakr-e Mokarram has related:

"There was a *kiyā*¹⁴⁹ in Nishapur who was continually censuring the Shaikh. One day the Shaikh was given a basket of aloeswood and one thousand gold dinars. The Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: 'Prepare a *zir-vā*¹⁵⁰ and sweets for the Sufis.'

It was the Shaikh's practice that when someone brought him anything, more often than not he would order it to be consumed

in front of the person and the darvishes would partake of it in that person's presence.

The Shaikh ordered the basket of aloes-wood, all of it at once, to be placed on the fire. An enormous perfumed scent rose up. The Shaikh said: 'Let our neighbors have a share in this as well!'

And so, the aloes-wood was placed on the fire and an extremely fine dinner was served with sumptuous care and a huge perfumed scent rose up.

Then the *kiyā* came in, intending to take the Shaikh to task. The *kiyā* said: 'At a time like this when, as you see, there is dearth and hardship, what is the meaning of such extravagance!'

He came close to the Shaikh's raised platform and speaking angrily, he forbade the Shaikh to do such things and abused him. At first, the Shaikh did not reply and the companions were vexed and upset.

Then the Shaikh raised his head and gazing at the *kiyā*, said: 'Bend down!'

The *kiyā* bent over. The Shaikh said: 'Bend down even further!'

He now bent double and could not straighten up. He left with the greatest difficulty and installed himself in a mosque which was located near the *kānaqāh*.

The Shaikh sent a darvish to look after him. The *kiyā* lived in this distressed condition for two and a half years. Then he was called to God."

.....

For this reason scholars and men of distinction have said one must not act boldly or with brazen manner towards shaikhs and the possessors of mystic states but only approach them at the right time and with respect, for they experience states and if they are in a state of contraction and their glance falls upon someone in anger, that person will be utterly destroyed.

We take refuge in God (from such an eventuality)!

* * *

Kvāja Esmā'il-e Mokarram has related:

"One day in Nishapur I was walking along a certain road when I met Shaikh Bu Sa'id. I greeted him with 'salaam' and he returned my greeting.

Book Two, Chapter One

When he rode past me, I then walked behind him and my gaze fell upon his foot and stirrup. The thought occurred to me: 'How I wish the Shaikh would allow me to kiss his foot!'

When this thought had crossed my mind, the Shaikh immediately reined in his horse, so that I could catch up with him. He removed one foot from the stirrup and held the foot before me.

I kissed the Shaikh's foot and the Shaikh then drove on his horse."

* * *

Rašid al-Ṭāyefa 'Abd al-Jalil has recounted:

"Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id had a certain supporter in Nishapur. He was a poor man from Ganj-e Rud¹⁵¹ and he constantly came to see the Shaikh. In the way of worldly wealth he possessed a small vineyard which was the source of his and his children's livelihood. One time he said to the Shaikh: 'The Shaikh and his companions must come and visit my vineyard.'

The Shaikh replied: 'That is not what you require.'

The man came back several times and repeated this request with the same words but the Shaikh did not consent and agree. Then one time he came before the Shaikh and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I desire that the Shaikh and the companions enter my garden just once and pick some grapes.'

The Shaikh declined the invitation¹⁵² many times but as it was of no avail, he mounted up and set out along with the companions.

The vineyard was small and the grapes were few and the people were many. The darvishes ate all the grapes.

A darvish wrapped two very fine bunches of grapes along with some green leaves in a *dar-e rebāṭi*¹⁵³ prayer-rug and put the rug in a corner of the vineyard where no one could see it.

When the darvishes had eaten all the grapes and left, the man surveyed his vineyard and didn't see any grapes.

Someone said to him: 'God give you blessings!'

The man replied: 'This year's blessings, at any rate, have disappeared!'

When the Shaikh and his group had gone, the man went into his vineyard and as hard as he looked, he couldn't see any grapes. He was upset. He came out of the vineyard and locked the gate and was angry with the vineyard. That winter he didn't go back to the vineyard, nor did he go to see the Shaikh.

The following year, when it was time to cultivate the vines and people were returning to work on their vineyards, the man thought to himself:

'This is no way to behave. I should cultivate my vines. There's no profit to be had by my being angry with the vineyard. If any wrong was done, I am the one to blame.'

He rose to his feet and entered his vineyard and having looked all around it, he saw a *dar-e rebāṭi* prayer-rug that had been placed in one corner of the vineyard. He picked it up and unfolded it. There inside the rug he saw two bunches of fresh grapes, surrounded by fresh green leaves.

The man was filled with joy. He picked up the grapes and placed them on a tray and brought them before Sultan Suri¹⁵⁴, who was the sultan at that time.

The sultan was delighted and ordered the man's platter to be filled with gold.

The impoverished man was exceedingly pleased and realized that this bounty was from the footsteps of the Shaikh and the companions. He was sorry for his having been angry previously. Having gone home, he took ten dinars of the money and went before the Shaikh, intending to ask forgiveness for the anger that had come over him.

When he entered the *kānaqāh* and the Shaikh caught sight of him, the Shaikh said: 'If Sultan Suri hadn't met you, you would have lost what's best for you¹⁵⁵.'

This man of paltry means fell at the Shaikh's feet and repented of his former life."

* * *

When our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, he gave lavish banquets and often had the *samā'* performed. And the Shaikh provided his group of followers with sumptuous foods, such as especially fattened poultry, almond candies, and halva made with sugar.

During this time a pious bigot¹⁵⁶ who was a detractor of the Shaikh's, came before him and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have come to undertake a forty day fast with you!"

The poor fellow was completely unaware of the Shaikh's early spiritual state and his forty years of ascetic practices. He imagined the Shaikh had lived this way all his life. He thought to himself: "I

Book Two, Chapter One

will wear the Shaikh down with hunger and disgrace him in the eyes of the people. And I will come out on top."

When the detractor pronounced his challenge, the Shaikh said: "May it prove a blessing!"

The Shaikh spread out his prayer-rug and the detractor spread out his alongside the Shaikh and they both sat down. The detractor followed the usage of those who practice the forty day fast and ate a slight amount but the Shaikh ate absolutely nothing and did not break his fast.

Every morning when it got light, the Shaikh was more robust and more corpulent and rosy cheeked. And he always ordered the banquets to continue in his presence and went on providing his followers with the same delicious foods as before. And they performed the *samāʿ* and the Shaikh danced as always. His spiritual state did not change at all from what it had been.

As for the detractor, every day he was weaker and more haggard and more pale and impotent. Each time the Shaikh, there in front of them, ordered dinner to be served for the Sufis and the detractor saw those delicious foods, the effect on him was as if he had to endure a second forty day fast.

Finally, he grew so weak, it was only with difficulty that he was able to rise to perform the required prayers. He regretted his challenge and realized how ignorant he had been.

When forty days had elapsed, our Shaikh declared: "I have accomplished what you proposed. Now you, in turn, must do what I say."

The detractor didn't understand but replied: "Let it be as the Shaikh commands!"

The Shaikh said: "We have sat for forty days and not eaten but we have gone to the lavatory. Now we will sit for forty days and eat but we will not go to the lavatory!"

The detractor had no choice but to say: "Let it be as the Shaikh commands!"

To himself he thought: "This is not possible. No human being can do this."

The Shaikh ordered savory foods to be brought and the Shaikh began to eat. The detractor, as well, had an appetite due to the forty day fast and he ate a good amount of food.

When some time had passed, the man had to go to the lavatory. He bore up patiently for a while and looked over at the Shaikh. The Shaikh was calm and untroubled. Then the man's en-

duration came to an end. He fell at the Shaikh's feet and repented of every claim he had made.

The Shaikh said: "*In the name of Allah, now go to the lavatory!*"

When the man returned, the Shaikh said: "Now sit with me and live as you wish, while I carry out what I have said."

The detractor sat like that alongside the Shaikh and the Shaikh went on for forty days and nights as he had said and ate meals as usual with the man and the group of darvishes. They performed the *samāʿ* and the Shaikh danced and in this way he lived his usual life but -- did not go to the lavatory.

When the detractor observed this state of affairs for a while, he realized that this lay beyond the power of such men as himself. He sought forgiveness for what had happened and became a disciple of the Shaikh and remained in the Shaikh's service.

* * *

There was a censor in Nishapur who was a follower of Bu ʿAbdollāh-e Karrām¹⁵⁷ and disapproved of the Shaikh. One day he was taking a quantity of clothes to a washerman to have them washed. Along the way he passed by the Shaikh's assembly. The Shaikh was speaking and the censor thought to himself:

"I'll come back straightway and tell these people what's good for them!"

Then he left and delivered the clothing to the washerman and gave him one silver dirhem. The washerman said: "Give me at least enough to cover the cost of the washing soda and the soap. I've renounced my own fee."

The censor beat him badly inside the mosque. The old man departed in tears and the censor went back the way he had come.

As it happened, the Shaikh was still speaking and had not brought the assembly to a close. The censor came through the *kānaqāh* door and said: "Oh Shaikh, how long will you continue with this hypocrisy and conceit?"

The Shaikh said: "*K^vāja* censor, what should I do?"

The censor replied: "You shouldn't speak before assemblies and you shouldn't recite poetry."

The Shaikh said: "I will do as the censor wishes. But, for his part, the *k^vāja* censor should not behave as he did this morning. He took clothes to the washerman's and gave him one silver

Book Two, Chapter One

dirhem and the washerman said: 'Give me the full cost of the soap, for I'm not asking for my fee.'

But the censor beat him with a whip until the old man, with his heart distraught and tears in his eyes, ran off into the countryside, bruised and hurt. The censor didn't fear that any harm will come to him from that old man's breast.

Whenever you need to have your clothes washed, bring them here and give them to Ḥasan. He will wash them and send them back to you sprinkled with rose water and perfume. That way, no Muslim will suffer harm at your hands and no sin will be committed."

The censor let out a shout and fell at the Shaikh's feet. He repented of his former disapproval and quarrelsomeness.

* * *

KṼāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e 'Eyāzi said:

"I heard KṼāja Ḥoseyn-e Ġenāduṣṭi¹⁵⁸ relate the following: 'I was attending Shaikh Bu Sa'id's assembly in Nishapur and the Shaikh was speaking. During the Shaikh's discourse the thought of my mother and of Saraks entered my heart. The Shaikh immediately turned to me and said:

*"Make haste to reach your loving mother's side!
She weeps profusely and cries because you're absent."*

I left the Shaikh's assembly and straightway set out for Saraks. I found my mother ill and at death's door. I arrived in time and saw her, and the next day she died.

I realized this was the reason the Shaikh had ordered me: *"Make haste... !"*

* * *

One day in Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly. There was a merchant in the audience. As it happened, the merchant thought that when the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close, he would invite the Shaikh to his house and offer him a *zir-vā*¹⁵⁹ he had prepared, and halva made with sugar. In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh turned to the merchant and said:

"Oh generous fellow, go and give the pot of stew and the halva that you've prepared for me, to a porter to carry but when he gets tired and stops along the way, deliver the food there."

The man left and placing the cauldron on a porter's back, he had the cauldron carried until the porter got tired and put it down. Then the merchant went to the door of the closest house and called out.

An old man came to the door and said: "If you've got *zir-vā* and halva made with sugar, bring it in!"

The merchant said: "This is the strangest of the Shaikh's miracles!"

And he asked the old man: "How did you know we had *zir-vā* and halva with sugar?"

The old man replied: "For several days we haven't had any food. A babe in its cradle, by concentrated longing¹⁶⁰, prayed without words to the effect that:

'Oh Lord God, give my father, my mother, and my brothers a *zir-vā* and halva with sugar!'"

His prayer was answered. Shaikh Abu Sa'īd was aware of this situation and sent the food.

* * *

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Sanjāri said:

"I heard the following from Shaikh Bu Moslem-e Fāresi, who has related: 'When Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami¹⁶¹ died in Nishapur, I set out for Meyhana to visit Shaikh Bu Sa'īd-e Bu'l-Keyr. (*God sanctify the souls of them all!*) It was towards the beginning of the Shaikh's spiritual career.

When I arrived in Meyhana, I went before the Shaikh, who was inside a mosque. He received me with honor and said to a darvish: "See if there is something for him to eat."

The darvish went out but came back and said: "I couldn't find a thing."

The Shaikh exclaimed: "*Oh poor man, how poor you are indeed!*"¹⁶²

Then I remained with the Shaikh a few days.

When I was about to depart for home, I asked the Shaikh if he would write me something with his own hand. He wrote¹⁶³:

"The clouds of separation withdrew from love's moon.

Book Two, Chapter One

*The light of peace dispersed the darkness of quarrels.
And gently blows the breeze of apologies.
Up from the heart, love's pardon meets the breeze."*

I took the piece of paper he gave me, and bade the Shaikh farewell. When I was on the point of departing, the Shaikh recited:

*"You see them looking at you but they do not perceive you."*¹⁶⁴

I set out and returned to Pārs.

A long period of time passed and then one day a darvish from among our companions, whose name was Moḥammad-e Kuhiyān, set out to visit Shaikh Bu Sa'id in Khorasan. I said to him: "When you go before the Shaikh, give him my greetings and tell him:

'You see them looking at you but they do not perceive you.'"

The darvish departed and visited the Shaikh. When he came back, he said: "When I arrived in Nishapur, Shaikh Bu Sa'id was there. I went to see him and greeted him with 'salaam'. The Shaikh returned my greeting and then said:

'You see them looking at you but they do not perceive you.'"

* * *

Ostād Imam Esmā'il-e Šābuni¹⁶⁵ has related:

"During the period our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, one day I went to visit him. On my way there I recalled the time I had studied Traditions of the Prophet together with the Shaikh at the feet of Ostād Imam Bu 'Ali Zāher¹⁶⁶ in Saraks. And I wondered which of those Traditions I could remember and which fascicle they were in and how many fascicles I had written down. These thoughts were on my mind when I went before the Shaikh and greeted him.

The Shaikh rose to his feet and embraced me. When I had sat down, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Ostād, of those Traditions which we heard from Ostād Bu 'Ali Zāher, which is the first one in the first fascicle?'

I replied: 'Without looking at the fascicle, I couldn't tell you.'

The Shaikh said: 'The first Tradition begins:

"Love of this world is the root of all sin."

Then the Shaikh asked: 'What is the second Tradition?'

I replied: 'I don't remember.'

The Shaikh said: 'The second Tradition is this:

"Leave what you doubt for what you are sure of."

Then the Shaikh asked: 'What is the third Tradition?'

I replied: 'I don't remember.'

The Shaikh said: 'The third is this:

"The Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, never put anything aside for tomorrow."

Ostād Esmā'il goes on to relate: "When the Shaikh quoted these Traditions, I remembered it was as he said. And I was aware that the Shaikh had shown me that, through his miraculous gifts, he knew what I'd been thinking on my way to visit him.

I realized with certainty that the Shaikh has complete knowledge of our secrets."

* * *

Shaikh Esmā'il-e Sayyāri has related:

"Our Shaikh had come to Nishapur and I never failed to attend his assemblies. In his assemblies, however, the Shaikh often quoted poetry and in my heart I always felt disapproval at that.

One day in the midst of his discourse the Shaikh looked at me and recited:

'Indeed, we have loved and our whole being sings!

This I say in reply to your dislike!

My disapproval left me.

Another day I went to the Shaikh's assembly and the reciter chanted:

*'Thus have We sent down to you a Spirit of Our command, to you who did not know what the Book and the faith were.'*¹⁶⁷

The Shaikh repeated the words:

Book Two, Chapter One

'You who did not know! You who did not know!'

These words caused an ecstatic state to come over me. With great difficulty I kept myself under control, thinking I hadn't objected to the Shaikh.

When I went home, I was taken with fever. It occurred in my heart to send something to the Shaikh but the following day my fever dropped and I changed my mind.

When several days had passed, I went to the Shaikh's assembly. I was wearing a woollen cloak. A poor man in the audience asked for something to wear. The Shaikh looked at me and said: 'It will prove a blessing if you donate this woollen cloak to the poor man and don't change your mind like you did the other day.'

I let out a shout and gave all my clothes to the poor man."

* * *

During the same period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, one Saturday morning he came forth with the group of Sufis and was walking down a certain road. A Jew came along with a *ṭeylasān*¹⁶⁸ over his head and dressed in his finest clothes. He was on his way to the synagogue.

The Jew saw from a distance that the Shaikh and his group were approaching. God, *He is sublime and exalted*, gave the Jew vision. He beheld the Shaikh's grandeur and his own abjectness. Out of shame he fled from the Shaikh.

The Shaikh set out after him. The Jew went on but the Shaikh pursued him. Finally, the Jew came to the end of the street and there was no way out. He was forced to stop. He put his face to the wall so the Shaikh wouldn't see him and he wouldn't see the Shaikh.

The Shaikh then came up to him and placing his blessed hand on the Jew's head, said:

"Don't use unpleasant words with the camel driver.
He enjoys exile and wandering in the night.

Oh poor fellow, *God perpetuate your life!* How are you and what is your state? Are you able to live without Him?"

When the Shaikh said this, he turned and left. The Jew let out a cry and ran after the Shaikh. In a loud voice he said:

"I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Moḥammad is the Prophet of God!"

When he caught up with the Shaikh, he fell at the Shaikh's feet. He then went with the Shaikh to the *kānaqāh* and pursued the true Islam -- due to the blessing of the Shaikh's glance.

* * *

It has been related that during the period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, many Jews and Christians became Muslims at the Shaikh's hand. And the other religious leaders of Nishapur all wanted someone to become a Muslim at their hand as well -- especially Shaikh Imam Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni¹⁶⁹, who desired this in a great way. He had an overseer who was a Jew and he was constantly urging him to embrace Islam. He would say to him:

"You must become a Muslim at my hand. Then I will look after your needs for the rest of your life."

But the overseer wouldn't consent.

One day Bu Moḥammad said to him in private: "If you become a Muslim, I'll give you one third of my possessions."

The Jew replied: "God preserve me from selling my religion for worldly gain!"

After this Bu Moḥammad still persisted and said: "If you become a Muslim, I'll give you one half of my possessions."

But the Jew would not consent and Shaikh Bu Moḥammad gave up hope.

One day it happened that Shaikh Bu Moḥammad was passing by 'Adani Kuyān Street and this overseer was with him. That day the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly and there was a great crowd in the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*. Shaikh Bu Moḥammad went into the Shaikh's assembly. The Jewish overseer said to himself: "Well now, I'll go in too and listen to this man's words. Let's hear what he has to say that draws such a crowd when he speaks. What is it that makes him so highly esteemed among the people? There's no sign¹⁷⁰ on me by which the Shaikh can recognize that I'm a Jew. I'm curious to see what kind of a person he is."

When Shaikh Bu Moḥammad went in, the overseer discretely followed after him and sat down and hid himself behind a column. When the Shaikh began to speak, he looked towards the column

Book Two, Chapter One

the overseer was sitting behind, and said: "Oh Jew, rise and come out from behind that column!"

As much as the Jew tried, he couldn't control himself. He rose to his feet involuntarily and came before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said to him: "Recite!"

The Jew asked: "What am I to recite?"

He said: "Recite:

I was an unbeliever. Now I'm a Muslim.

I was unfaithful. Now I bear the Command."

The Jew repeated these verses. Then the Shaikh said: "Go before K̲V̲āja Imam Bu Moḥammad and have him teach you the precepts of Islam and tell him: 'Did you not know that:

Affairs depend upon their moments and when the proper moment has arrived, there is no need of one third, or one half, or two thirds of a person's possessions.'"

A flush of joy came over Shaikh Bu Moḥammad when he heard these words. He repented of his previous desire and was sorry.

* * *

Bu Naṣr-e Šervāni was a rich man and one of the well-known merchants. He had made his home in Nishapur and possessed great wealth. When the fortunes of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, began to rise in Nishapur and all the people of Nishapur came to believe in the Shaikh, Bu Naṣr-e Šervāni was also of their number. He professed devotion to the Shaikh and every time he visited the Shaikh and beheld his evident miraculous powers, Bu Naṣr's devotion would increase.

One day our Shaikh along with the group of Sufis went to the bathhouse on 'Adani Kuyān Street, which was the bath he customarily frequented. That day the Shaikh was wearing a handsome woollen cloak from Rum¹⁷¹ and had wrapped around his head an expensive turban which a devotee had given him.

When the Shaikh entered the bathhouse, the barber was standing there. The Master of the bath came running and brought an impeccably clean cloth for the Shaikh. He showed the Shaikh

every form of respect and deference, waiting upon him until the Shaikh went into the bath.

The barber beheld the Shaikh's countenance and observed the Master of the bath's extreme deference, as well as the magnificence of the Shaikh's entourage. When the Shaikh and his company had gone into the bath, the barber asked the Master of the bath: "Who is this man?"

The Master of the bath replied: "That is Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr. He possesses miraculous powers and is very distinguished."

The barber was one of those who disapproved of the mystic community. He remarked: "If he has miraculous powers, let him give me his woollen cloak and turban. I've asked for a girl in marriage but they won't give her to me unless I offer a bride gift and pay for the wedding. And I don't have a thing."

When some time had passed, the Shaikh was ready for his head to be shaved. The barber came before the Shaikh and the Shaikh said to him: "Oh young man, you must bear in mind three things I'm going to tell you. One is when you are about to shave someone, purify your hands and your razor. Secondly, when you do the shaving, begin from the right. Thirdly, keep the hairs and dirt you remove from his head with your razor, so that they do not fall on the person."

The barber carried out everything as the Shaikh had ordered. When he had shaved the Shaikh's head, the Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Give my woollen cloak and my turban to this young man, so that he can use it to pay for his wedding expenses."

The young man fell at the Shaikh's feet and wept profusely. Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has related: "I was bringing him the clothing but on the way I thought to myself: 'The Shaikh has no other clothes and still he has given this away. Now he is left naked in the bath.'

When I'd given the clothing to the barber, I went back into the bath with a troubled heart and in doubt. The Shaikh said: 'Oh Ḥasan, once I've been informed, then I tell you but not before. Go to the entrance of the bathhouse. Bu Naṣr-e Šervāni is waiting for you.'

Ḥasan goes on to relate: "I went forth and saw Bu Naṣr-e Šervāni come through the bathhouse door carrying a set of fine clothes wrapped in a clean prayer-rug. He said to me: 'Oh Ḥasan, is the Shaikh in here?'

I replied: 'Yes, he's inside and has given away his clothes to the barber. He has been left naked in the bath.'

Bu Naşr-e Şervāni said: '*God is sublime!*¹⁷² A while ago I was reading from the Qor'ān which was placed before me on a book-stand but sleep came over me. In a dream I beheld a person who said: "Oh Bu Naşr, rise to your feet! The Shaikh is in the bathhouse on 'Adani Kuyān Street. He has given away his clothing and is left naked in the bath. Go bring him something to wear."

I opened my eyes and said: "This could be mere fantasy."

I began reading the Qor'ān but once again I fell asleep. I beheld the same person in a dream who repeated what he had said before.

I still didn't accept the dream. Again I was overcome by sleep. I took a pillow and lay down. When I was asleep, the same person appeared and shouted at me menacingly: "Hey Bu Naşr! You claim to be a devotee of the Shaikh. I've told you three times to bring clothes to the Shaikh because he's been left naked in the bath. But you take no heed. If you don't get moving, you will be destroyed this very instant!"

I awoke and jumped up out of fright. Then I prepared the clothes and brought them.'

Bu Naşr sat down at the entrance to the bathhouse and I went back inside. The Shaikh had performed his ablutions and was coming out. I returned to wait upon him.

When the Shaikh came forth from the bath, he put on the clothing. Then Bu Naşr placed a sealed bag of gold coins worth one hundred dinars before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: 'This money should be given to the Master of the bath. After all, when the apprentice gets married, it's only right that the master prepares a beverage.'

We gave the money to the Master of the bath. Then the Shaikh departed and Bu Naşr departed in his company and went to the *kānaqāh*. He remained in the Shaikh's service and all that he possessed in the way of goods and property, he spent on behalf of the Sufis."

.....

As long as the Shaikh resided in Nishapur, Bu Naşr remained in his service. When the Shaikh left Nishapur to return to Meyhana, he gave his green woollen jacket¹⁷³ to Shaikh Bu Naşr-e Şervāni and said: "You must return to your own district and raise my banner there."

Thus, following the Shaikh's instructions, Shaikh Bu Naşr went to Şervān and built a *kānaqāh* which still exists today and is

known by his name. There he deposited this garment of the Shaikh's and became the spiritual director and leader of the Sufis of that region.

To this day the *kānaqāh* is known after him and the Shaikh's garment is kept there. Fridays when the prayers are performed, the custodian of the sanctuary hangs the Shaikh's garment in a particular place in the *kānaqāh*. When the people come forth from the Friday mosque, before returning home, they all go to the *kānaqāh* and pay their respects to the garment. None of the inhabitants of the city would omit making this visit.

If at any time dearth or pestilence or some calamity strikes the region, the people, with the Shaikh's garment raised above their heads, all go forth into the countryside and pronounce an invocation and beseech God, *He is sublime and exalted*, by the sanctity of the garment and the Shaikh. The True, *He is sublime and exalted*, out of His generosity and respect for the Shaikh, wards off the calamity from them and sees that they attain their aims. The people of the region call this garment "The Proven Antidote" and show respect to the Shaikh's offspring beyond all measure.

And now, due to the blessing of the Shaikh's attentions and those people's sincere faith in the mystic community, over four hundred well-known *kānaqāhs* have been established in that region and the darvishes there receive much spiritual repose, due to the blessing of our Shaikh's attentive glance and concern -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

* * *

The following account is a compilation based on many narratives, some of which go back to *K̲vāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb*, while others go back to *K̲vāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ* -- *God have mercy on them!* They have related:

"One day in Nishapur in our Shaikh's *kānaqāh* they were performing the *samā'*¹⁷⁴ in the Shaikh's presence -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* During the *samā'* *K̲vāja Bu Ṭāher* experienced a flush of joy. While in ecstasy, he cried out '*labbeyk!*'¹⁷⁵ in front of the Shaikh and assumed the state of consecration¹⁷⁶ for undertaking the pilgrimage to Mecca.

When they finished performing the *samā'*, *K̲vāja Bu Ṭāher*, intent on making the journey to the *Ḥejāz*¹⁷⁷, asked permission

from the Shaikh. The Shaikh said to the company: 'Let us go along as well!'

The spiritual masters and men of distinction who were present, asked: 'What need is there for the Shaikh to do that?'

The Shaikh replied: 'I feel an attraction in that direction.'

A large group of Sufis and the Shaikh's disciples set out with the Shaikh. When they came forth from Nishapur, the Shaikh said: 'If it were not for my presence, those dear ones would be unable to bear the grief.'

Those in the group said to one another: 'Who is the Shaikh talking about?'

No one knew, and they went their way.

When they reached Ki and Mağz, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni¹⁷⁸, *God have mercy on him*, was informed: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id will be here tomorrow.'

And Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan was very pleased.

.....

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan had a son named Bu'l-Qāsem whom he loved dearly. He was a Joseph¹⁷⁹ to his father. It had been arranged for Bu'l-Qāsem to marry a girl on the night the Shaikh was meant to arrive in Karaqān. That very night the wedding procession took place.

Suddenly, Bu'l-Qāsem was captured. They cut off his head and placed the head before the door of his father's retreat. Towards dawn when the call to prayer was sounded, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan came forth from his retreat and his foot struck against his son's head. He called to the young man's mother: 'Bring a lamp!'

The mother brought a lamp and he beheld his son's head. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan exclaimed: 'Oh beloved of your father, what is this you have done? And what could you do that you have not done!'

Then he fetched several people and they washed Bu'l-Qāsem and wrapped him in a winding sheet and Bu'l-Qāsem was laid out to await the Shaikh's arrival. And the Shaikh was late coming.

Around midmorning a darvish arrived. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan asked: 'Where is the Shaikh?'

The darvish replied: 'Yesterday evening the Shaikh lost his way, otherwise he would have come last night.'

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan shouted at him: 'Silence! He doesn't lose his way. There was a land devoid of all forms of good fortune and thirsting for his footsteps. That land beseeched God: "Oh Lord

God, make the footsteps of a Friend pass across my surface, so that tomorrow I may feel proud above other lands."

That land's wish was granted. Dear ones were sent who took hold of this great man's reins and led him to that land and the land received special honor through his presence. And while he was absent, my son had his head cut off!

When the darvish heard this, he departed and told the Shaikh what had happened. The Shaikh exclaimed: '*God is great!*'

Then the Sufis and the spiritual masters realized that what the Shaikh had said at the gate of Nishapur, referred to this event.

.....

When our Shaikh Abu Sa'id reached Karaqān, he entered the kānaqāh and went to the room used as a mosque where Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan was. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan rose to his feet and came to the middle of the mosque to meet our Shaikh and there they embraced. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said:

'This is the balm required for my present burn. For the arrival of such a person the life of Bu'l-Qāsem was sacrificed.'

Then Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan took Shaikh Bu Sa'id by the hand, saying: 'Sit here in my seat.'

But our Shaikh would not sit there. He said to Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan: 'You sit in your own seat.'

And he didn't sit down. They both sat in the middle of the mosque and they both wept. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said to Shaikh Bu Sa'id: 'Speak to me and give me advice.'

Shaikh Bu Sa'id replied: 'You must speak.'

Then the Shaikh indicated to the reciters who were with him, to recite from the Qor'ān. They recited from the Qor'ān and the Sufis wept profusely and let out shouts, and the two shaikhs wept profusely. Finally, from where he was on his prayer-rug, Bu'l-Ḥasan threw his robe to the reciters and said: 'I have a duty to undertake and dear ones are waiting for me.'

They carried forth the bier, performed the prayers and the body was laid to rest. Ecstatic states were experienced and the Sufis returned to sit upon their prayer-rugs.

Then the foreign¹⁸⁰ Sufis disputed with the reciters, declaring: 'We should be given Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's robe to tear to pieces.'

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's servant told him what they had said. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan replied: 'Recognize their right to this robe and I'll give you another robe to tear to pieces.'

And he sent them another robe to divide up.

.....

A little room was assigned to the Shaikh where he could put his prayer-rug and affairs and be in private. And Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan advised each member of his group individually: 'Be on your guard. This man is the beloved of the realm and is aware of what is in everyone's heart. Don't disgrace yourselves.'

On this occasion Shaikh Bu Sa'īd remained with Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan three days and nights and, during these three days and nights, the Shaikh didn't speak at all. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan invited him to speak but Shaikh Bu Sa'īd replied: 'I have been brought here to listen. You must speak.'

Then Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: 'You are what I wished for from God -- *He is exalted!* I beseeched God, *He is exalted:* "Send me one of Your Friends so that I may whisper these secrets of Yours to him."

You are that wish of mine. I am an old man and weak. I couldn't come to you. You have strength and means. You have been brought to me.

You will not be allowed to go to Mecca. You are too esteemed to be taken to Mecca. The Ka'ba will be brought to you, so that it may circumambulate you."

.....

Accompanying the Shaikh on this trip was the mother of Kṽāja Moẓaffar¹⁸¹. She has related the following: "Every morning Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan would come to the room and greeting me with 'salaam', he would say: 'Oh *faqira*¹⁸², how are you? Be careful and be alert! You are associating with the True. Here nothing of human nature remains. Here no concupiscent soul remains. There is only the True! There is only the True!'

And in the middle of the day when Shaikh Bu Sa'īd had withdrawn in private, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan would come to the door of the room and lifting the curtain, he would say: 'May I have permission to come in?'

Shaikh Bu Sa'īd would say: 'Enter.'

Bu'l-Ḥasan would implore him: 'Don't lift your head from the bed. Stay just as you are.'

He would come in and kneeling down, he would say: 'Oh Shaikh, I suffer pains such that the prophets themselves would be

too weak to sustain. Were I to fetch up one sigh from this pain, the heavens and earth would be annihilated!"

Then he would bring his head very close to the Shaikh's pillow and whisper something and both of them would shed tears. And I didn't know, nor could I hear, what they were saying. And Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan would then put his hand under the Shaikh's robe and placing his hand on the Shaikh's breast, he would say: 'I am laying my hand on the Light Eternal.'

.....

One day the *qāzi*¹⁸³ of the district came to offer his condolences to Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan. He was told: "Shaikh Bu Sa'īd is here."

He said: "I'll go in to see him and give him my greetings."

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan remarked: "Oh jurist, be alert and on your guard!"

The *qāzi* went in and said "salaam". He beheld the Shaikh propped up on a throne of pillows like a sultan. A darvish held the Shaikh's foot in his lap and was massaging it.

The *qāzi* has related: "I thought to myself: 'Where is any poverty here? How can this man, in the midst of such luxury, be the spiritual director of the darvishes? This is the way of kings, not the way of Sufis and darvishes!'"

When this thought passed through my heart, Shaikh Bu Sa'īd looked at me and raising his head from the pillow, said: 'Oh jurist:

How can the term "poverty" apply to anyone who is engaged in beholding the True?"

The *qāzi* let out a cry and fell unconscious. They went inside and lifted up the *qāzi* and carried him out. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan remarked: "I told you you wouldn't be able to bear the glance of kings."

The jurist said: "I have repented."

Then he fell unconscious again and remained like this one whole day and night.

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan then went before Shaikh Bu Sa'īd and said: "Oh Shaikh, you have used your terror-instilling glance¹⁸⁴, now use your glance of mercy."

Shaikh Bu Sa'īd placed his hand on the *qāzi* and the *qāzi* immediately recovered. He rose to his feet and departed.

.....

Book Two, Chapter One

Then Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "Oh Shaikh, every night I see the Ka'ba circumambulating your head. You have no need to go to the Ka'ba. Return home. You were brought here for this. You have performed the pilgrimage¹⁸⁵.

You have traversed the desert of Bu'l-Ḥasan's grief and heard him cry out '*labbeyk*' in supplication.

You have visited the 'Arafāt of his cell of seclusion and seen him cast forth his sighs like pebbles.

You have seen Bu'l-Qāsem-e Bu'l-Ḥasan offered as a sacrifice to your beauty.

You have performed the prayers of the feast over his Joseph and heard the cry of grief of those who have been burnt.

Return home! Had this been otherwise, Bu'l-Ḥasan would no longer exist. You are the beloved of a whole world!"

Shaikh Bu Sa'id said: "I shall go to Baṣṭām to perform a pilgrimage (to the grave of another Friend) and then return home."

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "You have performed the *Hajj*. Now you will undertake the '*Omra*¹⁸⁶."

.....

And so, after remaining there for three days, Shaikh Bu Sa'id set out for Baṣṭām.

When the Shaikh reached Baṣṭām, he ascended a hill from which it is possible to see the tomb of Shaikh Bāyazid -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When the Shaikh set eyes upon the tomb, he stood for some time with his head lowered. Finally, he raised his head and said: "Whoever has lost something, this is where it will be returned to him."

Then he visited Baṣṭām. Concerning this occasion when the Shaikh stood before the tomb of Shaikh Bāyazid, Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has related: "I was standing behind the Shaikh. For a while, the Shaikh stood with his head lowered in veneration before Shaikh Bāyazid's tomb. Then he raised his head and said: 'Is this the place of those who are pure, or those who are not pure?'"¹⁸⁷

And he remained in Baṣṭām one whole day and night.

.....

Then the Shaikh set out for Dāmḡān and stayed in Dāmḡān for three days. Here he arranged supplies for the journey home, as there were one hundred Sufis accompanying the Shaikh, some of

whom were elderly. Thus, they hired horses and pack animals with the intention of setting out from there.

After they had recited the afternoon prayers, they performed the *samāʿ* until nightfall. The singer sang these verses:

"The door made noise. Now see! Is it my beloved?
Well do I know who cares what happens to me.
Three hundred roses bloom on my love's cheek.
I rise to pluck them. The rose is my vocation."

The Shaikh had two horses. One was his mount and the other carried his prayer-rug and affairs, and a darvish would ride it. The Shaikh sent someone to the singer to tell him: "That one horse -- the pack animal -- is yours to keep."

After they had performed the evening prayers, the Shaikh asked for his shoes and his horse. When he had mounted up and come forth from the *kānaqāh*, he said to *K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher*: "Lead the Sufis to *Ṣalva-by-Arey*¹⁸⁸."

Ṣalva is a village in the direction of Khorasan.

As the Shaikh rode off, he said to *K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher*: "Go back now and tomorrow set out after me."

.....

Ḥasan-e Moʿaddeb, a groom, and one other darvish departed with the Shaikh. When they came to the gate, it was shut with a lock. The key was in the military commander's house in the city. The gatekeeper said: "You must have permission and the key must be brought from the commander's house."

The Shaikh was still under the effects of the *samāʿ*. He let out a cry and then said to *Ḥasan*: "Remove the lock!"

Ḥasan pulled the lock and the wings¹⁸⁹ of the lock came undone. Then they opened the gate and having ridden forth, the gatekeeper closed the gate behind them.

.....

When they came out into the countryside, that night there was no moonlight. Moreover, the times were not safe. *Ḥasan* has related: "I was feeling afraid but the Shaikh said: 'Oh *Ḥasan*, recite something.'

That is, recite some verses."

Book Two, Chapter One

Hasan has related: "I didn't know any melody. I recalled the following verses in Arabic, which I recited without a melody. The Shaikh experienced the effects of *samā'* and began to shout. These are the verses:

*'The full-moon¹⁹⁰ promised me a visit at night.
If he keeps his promise, I'll make good my vows.
I asked: "My Prince, why is it you prefer
Night to the brightness of the shining day?"
He said: "I cannot change established custom.
Such is the custom of full-moons when they rise."*

And so we continued until a good part of the night had passed. Then the Shaikh grew calm and said: 'Bring me something to eat.'

But we had nothing to eat with us. A small fortress appeared and I said: 'I'll go and get something from there.'

He replied: 'Go and do that.'

I went to the fortress gate and knocked. Someone came out on the wall and asked: 'What do you want?'

I replied: 'We are travelers and have need of something to eat.'

They let down a turban band and I attached some money to it. They drew it up and having attached three loaves of barley bread to the turban, they lowered it down again. I took the bread and set out after the Shaikh. It was some time before I caught up with them. The Shaikh said: 'Have you brought something?'

I replied: 'Yes, I have.'

I broke one of the breads and took out a soft piece from the middle and gave it to him. He took three bits like that and ate them without saying anything. But then he said: 'You eat the rest of it.'

When it was midnight, the Shaikh said: 'Let us sleep a while.'

I replied: 'As the Shaikh commands!'

We went off to one side of the road and the Shaikh dismounted. But no one had a prayer-rug that we could spread out for the Shaikh. We removed the saddle cover from the saddle and spread it out so the Shaikh could lie down on it. His head rested on my lap and his feet were tucked under the darvish.

The Shaikh rested a moment and then got up again, so that we reached Arey when it was light. We put up in the house of the village headman and the Shaikh said: 'Tell the headman that guests will be arriving this evening.'

Then the Shaikh performed his ablutions and rested for a little while.

Towards the hour of evening prayers the darvishes arrived -- the whole group -- and the headman offered them lavish hospitality and they spent the night there. The Shaikh did not say anything other than: 'You've tired yourselves and endured much hardship.'

.....

The following day they performed the morning prayers and completed their recitations. When the sun had risen, the Shaikh sat and had the group assemble together. Then he turned to KVāja Bu Ṭāher and said: "I have come this far accompanying you but my part is now complete. It is ended. There is not to be any further travel abroad. What about yourself?"

KVāja Bu Ṭāher said:

"Since the Shaikh has reached his limit, it is also complete for me, by way of agreement with the Shaikh."

The Shaikh exclaimed: "*God is great!* For us it is finished."

Each member of the group was questioned, one by one. The Shaikh said: "Whoever has the intention to proceed in that direction¹⁹¹, let him depart. And whoever feels it is necessary, let him return with me. There will be no blame on anyone."

Each person said what his intention was. Thereupon the Shaikh said to whoever wished to depart for the Ḥejāz¹⁹²: "Put on your traveling shoes!"

And the Shaikh gave them provisions for the journey and sent them on their way with good cheer.

.....

The Shaikh called the headman and said: "I would like to stay in a place of fresh greenery."

The headman had a garden and there he prepared a handsome banquet. The Shaikh and the company of darvishes spent that day there very pleasantly. The following day they departed.

There are two villages called Ardiyān and Nušābād. The Shaikh and his company alighted at a village located below these two villages, at the edge of the desert where one sets out for Sabzavār. It was the Shaikh's intention not to set out for Baṣṭām and Karaqān, lest he be a burden to the people there. He hired beasts of burden here in this village, paying some of the money in

Book Two, Chapter One

advance, and arranged the provisions, for they would be in the desert for four or five days and the group with the Shaikh was very large.

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan knew where the Shaikh had gone and that he was resolved to avoid Karaqān. He despatched three darvishes who arrived in the village after the bedtime prayers. The Shaikh and his company were intending to set off into the desert with the pack animals at dawn. All the darvishes had gone to bed. The Shaikh, as well, had gone to bed but he was still awake. And Ḥasan having girded his waist, was performing some task and moving to and fro.

Then from the door there came a low voice. Ḥasan went and opened the door and beheld three darvishes enter with girded waists. Ḥasan had them sit down somewhere. The Shaikh called out to Ḥasan: "Come here."

Ḥasan went before the Shaikh and the Shaikh asked: "Who were the people who came in?"

He replied: "Darvishes from Karaqān."

He asked: "What do they have to say?"

He said: "I haven't asked them."

The Shaikh said: "Light a candle and bring it here."

Ḥasan lit a candle and put it down by the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "Summon them."

The darvishes came before the Shaikh and greeted him with "salaam". The Shaikh had them sit down and they delivered Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's greetings. The Shaikh replied: "*And my 'salaam' to him as well.*"

Then our Shaikh asked them: "What is Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's command?"

They replied: "He has said: 'By that God Who has given you this splendor, do not pass by without visiting me!'"

The Shaikh said: "May it be as he commands!"

Then our Shaikh said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Give them something to eat, and then straightway send two of them back to that *pir*, so that his heart may be at ease. Let one of them remain and travel in our company tomorrow. And if the muleteers come, ask for their pardon and give them their sacks."

Ḥasan has related:

"The muleteers arrived at night and I gave them the sacks and I didn't ask them to give me back the rental money. Likewise, I let them keep the supplies for the journey that were in the sacks, since the Shaikh had not given me instructions about this.

The Sufis had no idea of what had happened and imagined they would be setting off into the desert the next day. However, the Shaikh rode in the direction of Baṣṭām and Karaqān."

.....

A jurist from Baṣṭām rode up to the Shaikh and they rode along together. The Shaikh was extremely happy that day and recited verses. The scholar has said: "That day more than one thousand lines of verse passed the Shaikh's lips."

.....

In the meantime, while under way the darvishes had a dispute with Ḥasan, saying: "Give us something to eat."

Ḥasan replied: "The food was in the sacks that I gave to the muleteers."

They said: "And you let them keep the rental fee as well!"

Ḥasan replied: "The Shaikh didn't say to take back the money or to remove anything from their sacks."

They were talking about this, when the Shaikh came past. He asked: "What's the matter?"

Ḥasan replied: "The darvishes are saying: 'Why should you have to ask the muleteers for pardon, since you let them keep the rental fee and the provisions?'"

The Shaikh said: "We must ask their pardon because God, *He is sublime and exalted*, had granted them a favor. But He didn't accomplish that favor, for they wished to be in your company and to set their feet in the traces of your footsteps. Since they never received that bounty, everything else is as nothing alongside that. Most certainly we must ask them to pardon us."

.....

The day the Shaikh set out for Baṣṭām, he was extremely happy on the road. It passed our Shaikh's lips that: "If anyone has had an insight into 'this higher meaning'¹⁹³ and comes here and implores God through this moment, it would not be strange if God, *great is His might and glory*, gives him that insight once again."

.....

The Shaikh visited Baṣṭām and then set out for Karaqān and remained with Bu'l-Ḥasan for three days.

Book Two, Chapter One

One day while they were conversing, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan asked Shaikh Bu Sa'id: "Do they have wedding parties in your home province?"

He replied: "They do and at the wedding there are many spectators who are more beautiful than the bride but only one person possesses the marriage throne and hat and is on display¹⁹⁴."

Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan let out a shout and recited:

"Kosrow beheld his own condition
Reflected in his drinking bowl¹⁹⁵."

.....

One day Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan and Shaikh Bu Sa'id were sitting together and all their followers were present. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan turned to the company and said: "On the day of resurrection, all the great men will be brought together and a pulpit will be set up for each of them at the foot of the Lord's Throne. A voice will declare: 'Speak to the people about the True!'

And a pulpit will be set up for Shaikh Bu Sa'id, so that he may speak about the True to the True, and he will not exist in the middle."

.....

Thus, three days passed and on the fourth day the Shaikh asked permission to depart. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "Take the road to Janāšak through the mountains, for there are villages along the way. It will be easier for the darvishes."

And Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "I require thirty men who are disciples, who will be in your service as far as Nishapur. Ten of them will bring back news from you to me, and ten will bring you news from me. And in that way, ten will be your attendants until you reach Nishapur."

Then Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan with his offspring and all his followers went forth from the town to see the Shaikh off and at the moment of bidding the Shaikh farewell, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "Your path is one of expansion and joy, and my path is one of contraction and sorrow¹⁹⁶. Now you be happy and go on living joyfully, while I undergo your grief, for we are both carrying out His work."

And he sent as many men as he had with the Shaikh as far as Jājarm, so that they brought him back news of the Shaikh from each halting station and brought the Shaikh news of him.

.....

The day after Shaikh Bu Sa'īd had departed, they collected the carpets and gathered up the prayer-rugs¹⁹⁷ in Bu'l-Ḥasan's *kāna-qāh*. Where Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb's prayer-rug had been, they found a piece of paper -- under a carpet -- with something wrapped inside it. They took this before Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan and said: "We found a piece of paper with something in it."

He asked: "What is it?"

They replied: "We don't know."

Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "Take a look."

They looked and found it contained gold coins. He asked: "Whose prayer-rug was this lying under?"

They answered: "Under the prayer-rug of Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, who is Shaikh Bu Sa'īd's servant."

Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "Weigh the coins."

When they weighed them, the money came to twenty dinars. He asked: "What do our debts amount to?"

They looked into this and the debts came to twenty dinars. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan said: "The money should be spent to pay our debts, for Bu Sa'īd's debts are ours and our debts are his."

.....

Meanwhile, in the village where they had stopped Shaikh Bu Sa'īd said to Ḥasan: "Let us go into a bath."

And it was the Shaikh's custom that whenever he went to the bath, he would take ten Fathī dirhems¹⁹⁸ of silver to the bath with him. And Ḥasan always had some money with him for the transport fees and travel expenses. And if any donations were made, Ḥasan also kept that and would spend it in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions.

When Ḥasan was getting the money ready for the bath, he noticed that the piece of paper with the gold was missing -- the piece of paper which had been lost in *Karaqān*. He was upset. The Shaikh observed this and asked: "What is the matter?"

Ḥasan said: "Something I had, has been lost."

The Shaikh replied: "What happened there, happened for the sake of our repose as well."

The following day news arrived from *Karaqān* about the money they had found and what Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan had ordered and how they had acted. When Shaikh Bu Sa'īd heard what Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan had said, he remarked: "It is just as he says."

.....

Meanwhile, Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's disciples accompanied Shaikh Bu Sa'īd to Jājarm, in accordance with Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan's orders. From Jājarm Shaikh Bu Sa'īd sent them back and said: "We shall proceed from here to Nishapur. Give my greetings to Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan and tell him to keep us in his heart."

When our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd reached the district of Kuruy, the company of Sufis arrived at a village and wanted to stop there. Our Shaikh asked: "What is this village called?"

He was told: "Kalaf¹⁹⁹."

The Shaikh said: "We mustn't stop here."

Then they arrived at another village. Our Shaikh asked: "What is this village called?"

He was told: "Darband²⁰⁰."

He remarked: "We want no bonds!"

When they reached another village, the Shaikh asked: "What is the name of this village?"

He was told: "Kodā-Šād²⁰¹."

Our Shaikh said: "Kodā-Šād is where we must stay. One must be happy!"

Here they alighted. In the village there was a *kānaqāh*. The custodian immediately came forth and welcomed them in accordance with usage and waited upon them. He quickly slaughtered some sheep and said: "It will take time before the meal is prepared."

Meanwhile, he ordered the innards to be fried and brought this before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: "As a first step, one must devour the liver²⁰²!"

The custodian said: "May the Shaikh enjoy long life! I have put a little bit of heart in it as well."

This pleased the Shaikh and he said: "Since it has heart in it, it will be pleasing. Indeed, Bu Sa'īd is seeking heart."

They remained there that day and the following day set out for Nishapur.

.....

When they arrived in Nishapur, a certain group of Sufis were saying: "When the Shaikh reached *Karaqān*, his 'moment' and his discourse and all his ecstatic states were cut off and came to an end."

And they were saying this because when he arrived in *Karaqān*, he didn't say anything at all during his stay. But the rea-

son for this was as Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan had told him: "You are what I wished for. I beseeched God, *He is sanctified and exalted*: 'Send me one of Your Friends, so that I may tell him these secrets of Yours.'"

Since our Shaikh was brought there for that important matter, he did not speak. And the proof of this point is that while our Shaikh was there Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan invited him to talk and said: "Speak and give me some advice."

But our Shaikh replied: "You must speak. I have been brought here to listen."

But this group of Sufis talked that way because they were unaware of this subtle point. Their words were reported to our Shaikh and he said:

"That ground longed for me and when we met, I became completely extinguished in that ground."

That is to say: "That ground desired me. When I arrived there, I turned to dust in that dust and came to an end. Indeed, the great do not speak."

This was our Shaikh's answer to their objection and when one reflects on the truth of it, the meaning expressed therein becomes clear.

This is what I found out concerning the Shaikh's journey to Karaqān and his return to Nishapur.

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"Our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's final return from Nishapur to Meyhana took place in the following manner. Two of our Shaikh's intimate disciples quarreled with one another. When a dispute occurred between two darvishes, it was our Shaikh's practice to remain silent until they had emptied their hearts. When he knew that their interiors were cleansed, then he would say a few words and effect a reconciliation and make peace between them.

When, in this manner, the Shaikh had had a word with the disciples, the usual reconciliation was brought about.

For some time all the Shaikh's children and grandchildren, young and old alike, had been in Nishapur and they wished to return to Meyhana.

When this quarrel between the darvishes was settled and smoothed over, our Shaikh said to K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher: 'Rise and make arrangements for the children, for I am sore at heart and would like to return to Meyhana.'

K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher rose to his feet and having taken out loans, arranged everything for their journey. Forty donkeys were provided for the saddle bags, and forty darvishes, so that each darvish would have one saddle bag to look after. And he ordered eight darvishes to turn back from each halting station and bring reports of the group's safety to the Shaikh.

Moreover, the people of Nishapur gave every aid and assistance that was required of them, for they said: 'Once the group of the Shaikh's offspring is gone, the Shaikh will not be preoccupied but will have leisure and take care of us. We will see him, and he will see us, more easily.'

The day the Shaikh was to send the children on their way, he mounted his horse and wearing a *faraji*²⁰³ over his shoulders and a *mozdavaja*²⁰⁴ on his head, he rode to the Šuknān Gate. There he halted while they led the saddle bags before him, and he asked: 'Whose is this? And who will ride on this one? And which darvish will look after this saddle bag?'

Then he would call that darvish and admonish him, saying: 'Watch how you behave and be alert!'

This went on until all the saddle bags had passed before the Shaikh."

.....

The last person to pass before the Shaikh was K^Vāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ.

.....

He has related:

"I was about seventeen or eighteen years old. When I came before the Shaikh, he said: 'Which is your donkey and saddle bag?'

I replied: 'Oh Shaikh, I have no donkey and saddle bag.'

He asked: 'Will you go on foot?'

I said: 'Yes, I will, oh Shaikh.'

He said: 'You are not able to go.'

I replied: 'With the Shaikh's favor, I will go.'

In the midst of the group the Shaikh lowered his head and said: 'Give my greetings to your mother. Tell her to be kind to the

children and that in four days I will see to it that I am with you all
-- *God willing!*

I rubbed my face on the top of the Shaikh's shoes and set off."

.....

KṢāja Bu'l-Faḥ has said:

"Up to this point I witnessed these events myself. When the Shaikh came to Meyhana, I heard the rest of the account from his personal servant."

.....

KṢāja Bu'l-Faḥ goes on to relate:

"My father, KṢāja Bu Ṭāher, didn't accompany us but setting out with the Shaikh from the place of leave taking, returned to the city of Nishapur. When the Shaikh reached the *kānaqāh*, he did not speak before an assembly that day, for it was too late by then but the Shaikh held an assembly the following day.

During an assembly the children of the Shaikh would sit on the Shaikh's raised platform gathered together at his right side. And it was the Shaikh's practice not to come out of his room until sunrise. It was always the same. Once the sun had risen, then the Shaikh come forth from his room. This day, when the Shaikh came forth, his eye fell on the spot where his children used to sit and he said: 'My children are the apple of my eye²⁰⁵ and I cannot bear to see their place devoid of their presence. Bu Ṭāher has contracted a debt. The debt must be paid back so that we can set out after the children.'

When the Shaikh said this, the disciples and the people of Nishapur felt distress. They said: 'We have committed a great error and mistake. We thought that once his preoccupation with his children was removed, he would no longer think of them.'

That same day they made arrangements to pay off the Shaikh's debts. The Shaikh felt he must keep to the schedule he had set. The debts were paid and the preparations for travel were seen to.

When all the travel arrangements were completed and the Shaikh made his resolution to depart, all the men of distinction, the religious leaders, and the darvishes of the city of Nishapur came to plead with him but it was of no avail.

.....

When it was close to the time of departure, Shaikh Bu Mohammad-e Joveyni and Ostād Esmā'il-e Šābuni²⁰⁶ came to plead with him. They both arrived at the door of the *kānaqāh* and politely deferred to one another. Each one said: 'You go in ahead of me!'

This went on until they took one another by the hand and entered together.

Our Shaikh was seated on his raised platform opposite the entrance to the *kānaqāh*. They came in and greeted him with 'salaam'. The Shaikh sat one of them on his right side and the other on his left. All three brought their heads together and spoke many secrets. No one knew what they said. They spoke for some time and pleaded with the Shaikh to consent not to depart.

It was of no avail, for the Shaikh would not consent. When they had spoken for some time, the Shaikh said: 'Yes, indeed, many are in need here but many are in need there as well. I have surrendered myself to the one who has the upper hand over me.'

The very last thing they said to our Shaikh was: 'Oh Shaikh, in any case Meyhana is a rural town. We feel sorry for you in Meyhana!'

Our Shaikh replied: 'Meyhana and only Meyhana! You feel sorry for me in Meyhana but I feel sorry for you in this world and in the world to come.'

They were put to shame and realized that the Shaikh would not remain. They bade him farewell and departed. And the Shaikh having made all his arrangements, set out.

When the Shaikh's horse had been saddled, the Shaikh came forth and standing on a platform that was set up in front of the *kānaqāh*, said to the residents of the *kānaqāh*: 'I am leaving this hospice just as I found it. I have not changed so much as one brick.'

Then he recited:

'A bird sat on the mountain, then flew away.
Look! Has the mountain grown or shrunk in size?'

The company of his offspring and disciples said: 'Oh Shaikh, for some time this hospice has been adorned with your beauty, and the company of darvishes has received much beneficence. Now appoint someone so when a traveler arrives, he will not be neglected.'

The Shaikh replied: 'Keep the kānaqāh door open and the kānaqāh swept and clean, with a bright lamp, and maintain a clean lavatory with abundant clods²⁰⁷. Whoever comes, will bring his own sustenance with him. I have left you no means of subsistence. God, *He is exalted*, will send whatever is necessary.'

.....

And it was as the Shaikh said. That kānaqāh never had a fixed source of income. Nonetheless, the kānaqāh's company of darvishes was always larger than that of the other kānaqāhs and this kānaqāh was always more prosperous from occasional donations than all the other kānaqāhs of Nishapur. That was due to grace from the Shaikh's words and blessed attentions. Such was the state of affairs until the interlude of the Ğozz when the city of Nishapur and the kānaqāhs were destroyed.

.....

"When the Shaikh had set out on his horse and ridden so many paces, he said to a darvish who was walking in attendance on his stirrup: 'Go back and pick up a bone that is in the vestibule of the kānaqāh. Throw the bone out.'

All the religious leaders and spiritual masters of the city of Nishapur, all the men of distinction and the darvishes, came to bid the Shaikh farewell. Once again they beseeched him at great length. The Shaikh's last words to them were these verses he recited:

'The place where once I had an encounter with you,
That's where I'll go and turn my face to the wall.'

.....

Then the Shaikh bade the company farewell and set out for the Zošk mountain pass. When he reached Şonduq-e Sakana, the Shaikh's horse slipped and his thigh was pinned under the horse's flank. The flesh of his thigh was bruised.

A carpet was spread out and the Shaikh was laid on the carpet. Four darvishes taking hold of the corners, carried the Shaikh to the top of the pass and set him down in the stone house there.

A darvish arrived from the direction of Tus and passed in front of the Shaikh. When the Shaikh laid eyes on the darvish, he called him and said: 'What direction have you come from?'

He replied: 'From Ṭus.'

The Shaikh said: 'And where are you heading?'

The darvish replied: 'For Nishapur.'

The Shaikh said: 'Go to the *kānaqāh* of the Sufis and deliver my greetings to them. They told me repeatedly that I shouldn't leave. But lest they now take this to be a miracle of theirs, tell them: "It was my horse that made a mistake, not I."'

And the Shaikh was also carried by hand from the mountain pass of Ṭus, since he still could not ride a horse.

Ostād Abu Bakr was then alive in Ṭus. He arranged a group of men from 'the village of the *kānaqāh*' which is called Rafiqān, telling them: 'This year I will not take any revenue from you, if you carry the Shaikh to Meyhana in a litter.'

And they provided a litter and carried the Shaikh to Meyhana by hand. The Shaikh remained disabled for several days in Meyhana before he recovered."

* * *

The following account goes back to Abu'l-Faḥl Moḥammad b. Aḥmad, the Gnostic of Nowqān²⁰⁸, who has related:

"Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was returning from Nishapur to Meyhana. When we were crossing the mountain, a certain person was accompanying us. It so happened the man thought: 'What sort of people are these who eat cakes and halva and delicious foods but call themselves Sufis?'

The Shaikh, by way of his spiritual gifts, became aware of the man's thought. Not wanting any harm to come to the man or any flaw to enter his religious faith due to the belief he held about the mystic community, the Shaikh called him and said:

'Go behind the mountain at this point and bring me information about what's there.'

The man left the Shaikh's presence and went behind the slope. There he beheld an enormous serpent. He was terrified. He returned to the Shaikh, confused and bewildered. The Shaikh asked: 'What did you see?'

The man described the situation. The Shaikh said: 'That serpent was my companion for many years.'

The man fell at the Shaikh's feet, repented and was sorry for his former disapproval."

* * *

It has been related that when our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was coming from Nishapur to Meyhana, he stopped along the way at a certain halting station. The darvishes had something to eat and went to bed. Towards dawn when it was time for the prayers, the muezzin gave the call to prayer. The darvishes did their ablutions and performed the prayer of tradition. Then the muezzin recited the *qāmat*²⁰⁹ and the company drew itself up in a line to perform the prayers.

It so happened that a darvish, being very tired, had remained asleep and only woke up when they recited the *qāmat*. When the group began the prayers of obligation, he felt ashamed and was embarrassed to get up, even though he was awake. Thus, he remained lying down, intending to get up when the group would disperse.

Meanwhile, a thief had come along and planned to steal something from their baggage. When the thief saw that the company was busy performing the prayers at a distance from the baggage and that their affairs were not being watched over, he made his move to carry off a piece of baggage. When he came into the midst of the baggage, the darvish who was awake but lying down, picked up a stone and threw it at him. The thief understood that someone was on the alert in the middle of the baggage, and he ran away without being able to steal a thing.

The company of darvishes had no idea of what had happened, since their backs were facing the baggage during the prayers. When they finished their prayers and beheld the darvish lying down, they reproached him saying: "Look at that fellow who hasn't performed his prayers!"

The Shaikh said: "A fellow without prayers²¹⁰ is necessary to look after your clothes, so that they remain clean for prayer!"

But the darvishes didn't understand what the Shaikh was talking about. When they went to their baggage, however, and realized what the situation had been, they understood that the Shaikh, due to his clairvoyance, had meant: if this darvish hadn't remained asleep, the thief would have stolen their clothes and the company would have been left without any clothing.

They repented of their disapproval.

* * *

The following goes back to my grandfather, Šeyk al-Eslām Abu Saʿīd, who has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Saʿīd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly and during his discourse he said:

"Men of learning are the heirs of the prophets."

And I shall say something in accordance with this Tradition²¹¹.

At this very moment someone is approaching Meyhana whom God and the Prophet love and who loves God and the Prophet.

The above Tradition is what Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, said about the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali, *God be pleased with him*, and what I am going to say²¹² is also on the basis of holding the succession to the prophets.'

A certain amount of time passed and then the Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu Ṭāher, you are the servant of the darvishes. Rise to your feet and go out to welcome my Yaḥyā.'

K^vāja Bu Ṭāher rose to his feet and those present did the same. Then a darvish appeared at the head of the street. He had on threadbare clothes covered in dust and carried a leather bag and a water jug over his shoulder. Meanwhile, the Shaikh was sitting on his dais.

When Yaḥyā of Transoxania²¹³ caught sight of the Shaikh, he bowed and continued bowing until he reached the raised platform which stood in front of the sanctified sepulchral shrine. And the Shaikh's dais was on top of the raised platform.

When he reached the platform, the Shaikh gestured to him to sit down. The darvish sat down and everyone in the gathering kept his eyes fixed on him because of his deranged appearance.

When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close, he said: 'You must make a major ritual ablution.'

Yaḥyā was escorted to the edge of the river to make his ablution and the Shaikh ordered that he be given a robe to wear. He spent three days with the Shaikh and every day he sat in the Shaikh's assembly. While discoursing, the Shaikh would look over at him and say something particular. Yaḥyā would make a sign of respect.

On the fourth day he rose to his feet and said: 'Oh Shaikh, my thought is for heading down there.'

He meant the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Shaikh replied: 'May it prove a blessing! Give my greetings to the Majestic Presence.'

Yaḥyā bowed and set out. But he walked backwards until he no longer had the Shaikh within view. Then he walked straight. The Shaikh ordered his children and the company of darvishes to go and bid him farewell. Thus, the children and the darvishes set off.

KVāja Abu Bakr-e Mo'addeb, who was the tutor in letters of the Shaikh's children, has related: 'The Shaikh said to me: "Since the pupils have set off, you go along as well. Endeavor to place your footsteps where his steps have been."

I made haste and caught up with him. I placed my footsteps where he placed his and I was the last person to bid him farewell and to return.'

The following year it was the same time, when the Shaikh, in the midst of an assembly, said: 'Go out to welcome my Yaḥyā.'

KVāja Bu Ṭāher with the entire company went forth as far as the gate. Yaḥyā was arriving with his leather bag and water jug slung over his shoulder. When he caught sight of the Shaikh's children, he bowed several times and then bowing along the way, he approached the Shaikh's raised platform. And the Shaikh was seated on his dais. Having come before the Shaikh, he kissed his hand and the Shaikh kissed his head.

When Yaḥyā was seated, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Yaḥyā, one cannot consume, all by oneself²¹⁴, the gifts of such a Majestic Presence. You must place at the group's disposal what you've brought with you and give them the benefit of it.'

Yaḥyā raised his head and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I set out and arrived. I saw and I received. But the Beloved is not there!'

The Shaikh let out a shout and said: 'Say it again!'

Yaḥyā repeated what he had said. The Shaikh let out a shout and said: 'Say it again!'

Yaḥyā repeated it a third time and the Shaikh raised a shout.

The Shaikh turned to the group and said: 'There is no truthfulness beyond the truthfulness of this man. Listen to what he says.'

Then he said: 'Oh Yaḥyā, so great a favor cannot go without a token of gratitude. You must contrive some offering of gratitude

Book Two, Chapter One

in return for this. Tonight the group must have a fine raisin stew with a carrot fricassee and saffron spiced sweets.'

Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher, and Yaḥyā rose to their feet and went off wondering to themselves: 'How can this be arranged in Meyhana?'

Moreover, the group amounted to more than a hundred persons.

Ḥasan has related: 'When we came to where the bazaar begins, one person was saying to another: "There he is -- the servant of the shaikh of the Sufis that you're looking for! He's just arrived."

A young man approached us and greeting us with "salaam", he then said: "I have come with a big caravan from Pušang-by-Herat. Bandits fell upon us on the road and I vowed that if I escaped from their hands, I would give an ass-load of raisins to the Sufis of Meyhana. Now come and take the raisins."

We went with him to the caravanserai to take the raisins. Someone else appeared and greeting us with "salaam", said: "I, as well, have made a vow."

And he gave us ten maunds²¹⁵ of refined sugar.

And another person came and said: "I have also made a vow."

And he gave us a Nishapuri dinar.

Setting out from there to return to the *kānaqāh*, we met K^Vāja Ḥammuya who was the headman of Meyhana and a devotee of the Shaikh. He asked us where we were coming from and we told him the whole story. He, in turn, gave us one hundred maunds of bread.

Then, straightway we returned to the Shaikh and prepared the banquet as the Shaikh had instructed. Thus, that night the banquet was held and the dinner was served.

Yaḥyā remained for three days and after that set out for Transoxania."

* * *

Bu 'Amr-e Boškevāni²¹⁶ was a man of great distinction. He spent thirty years in devotion residing in Mecca. He has said:

"I have conformed to the Tradition:

'The right hand is for the upper part of the body, and the left is for the lower.'

For thirty years my right hand has not descended below my navel, nor has my left hand gone above my navel, other than in accordance with the *Sunnat* ²¹⁷."

And he practiced many scrupulous acts of devotion like this. He has related: "When Shaikh Bu Sa'id's reputation spread from Khorasan to the sanctuary of Mecca, 'the people of the sanctuary', i.e. the *pīrs* and shaikhs, said: 'Someone must bring us information about the Shaikh so that we know what sort of person he is.'

And they added: 'For this task a man is needed who is learned, experienced, and acquainted with mystic states.'

All agreed on Shaikh Bu 'Amr and they requested of him: 'You must go to Meyhana and bring us back precise information about Shaikh Bu Sa'id, so that we know what sort of person he is.'

Shaikh Bu 'Amr went to Ṭus and from Ṭus he went on to Meyhana. Along the way he performed a major ablution seventeen times, once for each worldly thought he had had.

When he reached the outskirts of Meyhana, the call to noon-day prayer had been sounded and the congregation had performed the prayer of tradition. The muezzin was waiting for the Shaikh to give him the sign to recite the *qāmat* but the Shaikh said to the muezzin: 'Wait one moment! A person of living heart is arriving. And this much is known: where he's coming from, whom he's coming to see and whither he will go next.

Wait for him to arrive to join us in the prayers.'

When Shaikh Bu 'Amr reached a point one *farsang* ²¹⁸ from Meyhana, he had removed his shoes. The Shaikh said to his children and the companions: 'Take off your shoes and go forth to welcome a man who is such that no one else whose footsteps ever reached the earth of Meyhana, is more precious than he is.'

The group went forth to welcome him. Shaikh Bu 'Amr arrived, performed the prayer of tradition, and made obeisance to the Shaikh. Then the communal prayers were performed and for three whole days and nights they sat talking with one another in private. After that, Shaikh Bu 'Amr asked the Shaikh's leave to return to the spiritual masters in Mecca. Our Shaikh said: 'You must go to Boškevān, for you are my deputy in that district. Out of separation from you the trees of the district of Nasā have withered and drums are being beaten in your honor in the fourth heavenly sphere ²¹⁹.'

Bu 'Amr, in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, set out for Boškevān. When he bade our Shaikh farewell, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id gave Shaikh Bu 'Amr three toothpicks which he had carved

Book Two, Chapter One

with his own blessed hand, and said: 'If you are offered ten dinars for one of these, don't sell it and if you are offered twenty dinars, don't sell but if they offer you thirty...'

Here the Shaikh stopped. Shaikh Bu 'Amr bade our Shaikh farewell and made obeisance.

When Bu 'Amr arrived in Boškevān, he put up in a room which had been made into a *kānaqāh*. This *kānaqāh* is now known by his name. The people of Boškevān and the district of Nasā sought his favor and he made it his practice to recite the whole of the Qor'ān every Thursday in the *kānaqāh*. All the disciples and the people of the village would gather together and all the notables from the villages near Boškevān were eager to come. When they finished the complete recitation, Shaikh Bu 'Amr would ask for a jug of water and he would soak one of the toothpicks that our Shaikh gave him, in the water and the water would be brought to the sick people of the district. Then, through the auspicious power of both shaikhs, God, *He is sublime and exalted*, would cure the sick person.

At that time in Boškevān, the village headman was constantly afflicted with colic. One night the headman of Boškevān suffered an attack and could find no relief. During the night he sent someone to Shaikh Bu 'Amr to say: 'You have a piece of wood that you soak in water and you send the water to the sick. They drink it and are cured. Send me some of that water.'

Shaikh Bu 'Amr soaked one of the toothpicks and sent him the water. When the headman drank it, he was immediately cured. The following day early in the morning the headman came to see Shaikh Bu 'Amr and said: 'I understand you have three of these bits of wood. I suffer constantly from this ailment. Would you consider selling me one of them?'

Shaikh Bu 'Amr said: 'How much will you pay?'

The headman replied: 'Ten dinars.'

Bu 'Amr said: 'It's worth more than that.'

The headman said: 'Twenty dinars.'

The shaikh said: 'It's worth more.'

The headman said: 'Thirty dinars.'

He said: 'It's worth more.'

The headman remained silent and didn't bid any higher. Shaikh Bu 'Amr said: 'Our lord, Shaikh Bu Sa'id, also halted at this sum.'

Then he gave him one of the toothpicks and took the thirty dinars. Using this gold, he built out from the room that was there

and laid the foundation of the *kānaqāh* which now stands on the spot.

Meanwhile, the headman kept the toothpick as long as he lived. When he was on the brink of death, his final wish was that the toothpick be broken up and the pieces placed in his mouth."

As for the other two toothpicks which Bu 'Amr had, when he was on the point of death, his final request was that they be placed inside his shroud. Both those toothpicks, in accordance with his final wish, are in Shaikh Bu 'Amr's blessed tomb.

* * *

KṢāja Bu'l-Qāsem-e Zarrād-e Balziri was one of the intimate disciples of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He had undertaken journeys and practiced ascetic disciplines and self-mortification. He has related:

"I set out from Kufa on the pilgrimage to Mecca with a group of shaikhs. When we came forth from the city, some said: 'Let us travel devoid of all means²²⁰.'

Others said: 'Let us travel with absolute trust in God²²¹.'

I said: 'Oh Bu'l-Qāsem, you go your way in a state of wakefulness²²². Otherwise, go as you wish.'

I resolved that any step I didn't take in a state of wakefulness, I would retrace and in this manner I crossed the desert.

When I returned from Mecca and came back to Shaikh Bu Sa'īd, the night I arrived, I entered the Shaikh's mosque and positioning myself behind the spot where the Shaikh stood, performed prayers in such a way that I would put my face down on the spot. As the night drew to an end, I performed a major ablution.

I experienced a great light in my interior self and this made me feel elated. When dawn broke, once again I performed a major ablution. The light in question redoubled. I was filled with joy and exclaimed: 'I have found what I was seeking!'

When the Shaikh came forth in the morning, I went before him and my heart was filled with conceit because of my experience that night. The Shaikh said: 'Shall you tell it, or shall I?'

I replied: 'It is better that the Shaikh speak.'

He said: 'That was nothing that those on the path consider important. That came from the blessing of performing ablutions, for the Prophet, *God's prayers and peace be upon him*, has declared:

Book Two, Chapter One

"Ablution upon ablution is one light after another."

That is the light of ablutions. Don't be deluded by it.
I came back to my senses and repented of my conceit."

* * *

When the house of Saljuq came forth from Nur-e Bokārā²²³ in rebellion and arrived in Khorasan, they settled in Tažan-e Bāvard²²⁴ and Meyhana. Many people gathered around them and they conquered the greater part of Khorasan.

The cause of this was that Mas'ud, the sultan of that period, had neglected his dominion and occupied himself with depravity. And that is a well-known story but it is not my purpose to relate it. My purpose is to tell about our Shaikh. If I were to give a detailed account of that story, this book would become long and stray from my purpose.

Sultan Mas'ud, who was called Suri²²⁵, sent a royal mandate, threatening the Saljuqs. In their reply they wrote: "This matter lies with God – *mighty is His glory!* May it turn out as He wills!"

Meanwhile, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, knew what would happen through his clairvoyance.

Then the two brothers, Čağri and Toğrel²²⁶, came to visit the Shaikh in Meyhana. The Shaikh was seated in his sepulchral shrine²²⁷ with the company of Sufis. The two brothers came before the Shaikh's raised platform. Greeting the Shaikh with "salaam", they kissed his hand and stood before the Shaikh's platform.

The Shaikh, as was his practice, lowered his head for a moment. Then he raised his head and said to Čağri: "I have given you dominion over Khorasan."

And he said to Toğrel: "I have given you dominion over Iraq²²⁸."

They both made obeisance and departed.

After that Sultan Mas'ud took charge of the army and came to wage war against them. When he reached Meyhana, he took up position before the fortress gate. Our Shaikh and the people of Meyhana had gone inside the fortress.

.....

At that time Meyhana was prosperous and the people were numerous, such that it is said that in the Caravanserai of Edris, at the foot of the fortress, forty balances²²⁹ had been hung up.

.....

The fighting continued for forty days. Inside the fortress there were forty-one expert archers. Whatever they took aim at, their arrow, without fail, would hit the spot. They never missed. This group killed and wounded many of the notables of the sultan's army.

Hasan-e Mo'addeb has related: "One night in the fortress, after we had performed the bedtime prayers, the Shaikh called me and said: 'You must go to Bādana.'

.....

Bādana is a village located two *farsangs*²³⁰ from Meyhana.

.....

'Give my greetings to the old lady so-and-so and tell her to send the earthenware jar of clarified butter she was keeping for me.'"

Hasan goes on to relate:

"I was let down from the fortress wall on a rope and made my way through the enemy's midst without anyone seeing me. I went to Bādana and got the jar from the old lady. At dawn I reached the foot of the fortress and was hoisted up the wall on a rope.

That morning when we had performed the prayers, the Shaikh sat on a stool in front of the mosque and ordered braziers to be set up in the middle of the street. And he ordered cooking pots to be placed on top of them and some of the butter to be put in each pot and brought to a boil. No one understood what the Shaikh's purpose in this was.

Meanwhile, the people went on fighting. Then in the midst of the fighting, peace talks took place and peace was concluded. The headman of Meyhana came forth from the fortress and was given an honorific robe. Then he brought out the forty-one men who were expert archers.

The sultan ordered all forty-one of them to have their right hand cut off. Then they came and dipped their mutilated arms into the boiling butter. The Shaikh wept. Tears flowed from his eyes, as he said: 'Mas'ud has cut off the hand of his dominion.'

Book Two, Chapter One

When the sultan inflicted this punishment, he immediately broke camp and set out in the direction of Marv. The house of Saljuq had been informed of the sultan's approach and had left Tažan and gone before Dandānqān-by-Marv²³¹ and gathered the army together. When the sultan arrived there, both sides drew up their ranks for battle and Mas'ud was defeated.

Dominion passed from the family of Mas'ud to the house of Saljuq. Čağri assumed sovereignty over Khorasan and Toğrel ruled over Iraq, just as our Shaikh had predicted."

.....

During one of his assemblies the following passed our Shaikh's lips:

"One day the military commander, Toğrel, was near Meyhana. He was camping in the desert and his pillow was his saddle and for a rug he used his felt saddle blanket. He sent someone to the village to say: 'We are strangers who have alighted here. Because of our hardship, we are your guests. Send us some flour.'

When the flour was sent, he set out and headed for Saraks. A group of his own people was in Saraks. He said: 'I will begin with my own people.'

Everyone he happened upon, he made dismount and took possession of his horse. The rest of the people submitted to him. Then Suri²³² sent him a letter, saying: 'If you are causing this disorder, you will oblige me to come and arrest you.'

A person was sent back to answer: 'This matter doesn't depend on me or on you. It depends on the Lord -- *He is mighty and exalted!* Let it be as He has arranged.'

I said: 'This man's worldly fortune shall increase, because he has spoken thus.'

Now he has conquered all of Khorasan."

* * *

Hasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was on horseback, riding down a road. As was my custom, I walked beside him with one hand resting on his stirrup. The Shaikh said to himself in a low voice: 'I am a weak old man without endurance. Be generous and pass over me!'

When the Shaikh said these words, the Shaikh's horse slipped and fell. The Shaikh himself came off the horse but wasn't injured

by the fall. He exclaimed: 'Praise be to God that I have put this fall from a horse behind me.'

Then he prostrated himself in thanksgiving and said:

'God's command is a pre-ordained decree.' ²³³

I realized that the Shaikh's secret supplication and prayer had been because he saw the calamity in advance. He raised a prayer in supplication so that the calamity would not be serious and would pass without grief."

* * *

My grandfather, Šeyk al-Eslām Abu Sa'd, said he heard the following from his father, K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher-e Šeyk -- *God sanctify their souls!* K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher has related:

"There was an old man in Meyhana who was my mother's uncle. He was called Šabbu'i. He was an old man of great age, short in stature, with a thick beard and poor with a numerous family. He was always busy earning a living but never missed one of the Shaikh's assemblies. And he was an old man given to tears and passion.

One day during the Shaikh's assembly, an ecstatic state came over him. When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close and the people in the audience had gone, old man Šabbu'i just sat there. The Shaikh knew he was like game hung up by the neck. The Shaikh said: 'Old man, what's the matter with you?'

He replied: 'I can't leave.'

The Shaikh said: 'Then you must remain!'

The following day the Shaikh said: 'Gird old man Šabbu'i's waist and roll up his sleeves. And give him a broom to sweep out the mosque.'

The old man took up the broom and swept the mosque. The headman of Meyhana, K^Vāja Hammuya, who was sitting with the Shaikh, has related: 'The thought occurred in my heart that it would be more suitable if a young man performed this service.'

The Shaikh knew my thought through his clairvoyance and said: "Oh K^Vāja, this old man has acquired discipleship²³⁴ in his old age. And if you do not travel the path, you will not reach the goal."

Book Two, Chapter One

Tears welled up in old man Šabbu'i's eyes and he said: "Oh Shaikh, I am old and weak and I have a large family. If it depends on me traveling, take it for granted that I will not reach the goal. But you are the most powerful in the world. You are capable of doing something to help this old man."

Tears came into the Shaikh's eyes. He lowered his head for a moment and then raising his head, he said: "Put the broom down. It's completed.""

.....

My father, KVāja Bu Ṭāher, has related:

"Towards the noonday prayers the darvishes' wheat would be taken to the mill. It was the period of disorder and the beginning of the Torkomān devastations²³⁵. At times the countryside was unsafe."

KVāja Bu Ṭāher goes on to relate:

"I went before the Shaikh and said to him: 'The wheat is being taken to the mill. Whom shall I send with the wheat from among the darvishes?'

The Shaikh ordered: 'Old man Šabbu'i.'

I came out and sent old man Šabbu'i along with a few darvishes. When they entered the mill, they locked the door and ground the wheat into flour. Then the Torkomāns came to the mill door and banged on it. But those within didn't open the door. The old man stood behind the door and leaned his back against it.

A Torkomān shot an arrow through a crack in the door and the arrow struck the old man in the back and came out through his breast. He instantly died a martyr's death.

Having loaded him onto a donkey, they brought him back to Meyhana and put him down before the door of the Shaikh's house. When the Shaikh came forth and beheld old man Šabbu'i's white beard stained red with blood, he wept. He sat down by the old man's head and recited:

*'Among them there are those who have fulfilled their pledge, and there are others who are waiting.'*²³⁶

After that the Shaikh accorded the corpse high honors and the following day he spoke before an assembly at the grave. The headman of Meyhana, KVāja Hammuya, was present at the assembly. He has related:

'The thought entered my heart: "What sense did it make to kill this old man?"'

The Shaikh, through his clairvoyance and miraculous powers, was aware of my thought. He turned to me and said: 'Oh Kvāja,

Why do you gaze so much about the field?
Here are the serpent's jaws and the elephant's thrust.
Whoever enters, lays down his heart and life.
What's a peasant²³⁷ doing near the sultan's palace?

God's blessings be upon Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all."

* * *

It has been related that in Transoxania²³⁸, during the time of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, there was a group of *pirs* and important shaikhs. They were constantly meeting in assemblies and would express noble words concerning the mystic path. One of them, who was their leader, was an esteemed *pir* of great distinction. He had many disciples and for every disciple, he had an admirer²³⁹ among the men of the world and the merchants. Every evening he and his company would be the guests of one of the admirers. And each admirer had built a congregation room and a lavatory just behind the entrance to his house, such that this was a source of blessings for the whole group.

Nights, after they had performed the bedtime prayers and finished their recitations, it was their custom to sit on their prayer-rugs and meditate right through until the day. The following morning when they had finished their prayers, the *pir* would prop up his back and begin to speak and give an answer to anyone who had experienced some difficulty or care in his heart that night. Whatever was expressible in words, he would say.

The servant of this group was named 'Emrān, a man of passionate temper and a sincere lover. One night while meditating, the thought occurred to 'Emrān that: "This is a strange matter. If I seek Him, He remarks: 'Oh you of no significance, where are you rushing to? Do you imagine you will reach Me?'

And if I do not seek after Him, He says: 'Make haste!'²⁴⁰

Book Two, Chapter One

And if I seek anything other than Him, He remarks: 'You are a polytheist.'

And if I turn away, He says: 'You are an apostate.'"

'Emrān spent the whole night reflecting on this problem. That morning the *pir* began to speak and give answers to the difficulties of all the disciples. When he came to 'Emrān, 'Emrān rose to his feet and presented his difficulty. He said: "Oh Shaikh, a certain person is taken with seeking and spends a lifetime in that seeking, sometimes engaged in worship, sometimes in practicing self-mortification, and at times in rendering service and performing a pilgrimage. He consumes a whole lifetime in this pursuit but nowhere does any meaning reveal itself to him from that seeking which has come forth in him. What is the cause of this?"

The *pir* lowered his head and had no answer to give to the problem. Having thought for a long time, he finally raised his head and said: "Oh 'Emrān, wait until Friday, when all the shaikhs will be present and each one of them may give a pronouncement on this matter. Perhaps a clear answer will emerge."

On Friday the *pirs* of the region came together and 'Emrān presented his question. Everyone said something about the problem but no clear answer to it was forthcoming. He who posed the question received no cure, and all the comments contradicted one another. The day came to an end and no one had given an answer to 'Emrān's question. All the *pirs* remained silent.

The questioner cried out: "I have consumed a lifetime in a delusion. Today I took you to be great men of the mystic path. I tore away my veil and displayed my pain, thinking that you were physicians. But you have abandoned me to this pain -- and my veil has been torn away."

A cry arose from the group. That night everyone sat until morning with his head propped on his knee, reflecting on this problem. The following day everyone said what had occurred to him that night. Still no cure was found. The leader of the shaikhs said: "No remedy for this pain is to be found in our midst but in Khorasan a man has been made to appear, who has such a remedy. He is called Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr. You must go there to seek the cure. And we will not disperse until the answer to this question reaches us."

'Emrān straightway set off down the road. He walked in a deranged state and had no thought at all of food. And the group of Sufis was in the same state, their seeking being sincere, and they

would not allow themselves to be occupied with anything else, until this problem was removed from their path.

When ‘Emrān reached Meyhana, it was morning and the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly. As ‘Emrān drew near, the Shaikh caught sight of him and exclaimed with all his heart and soul: "Welcome, oh ‘Emrān! Come in. Today we have sat in assembly for your sake."

‘Emrān made obeisance and stood at a distance. The Shaikh said: "Come closer! For you have made a long journey."

‘Emrān came before the Shaikh and the Shaikh said: "Oh darvish, the mytic states are not of one and the same quality. Are you seeking Him or are you seeking from Him? The more than one hundred and twenty thousand prophets sought from Him. Until Moḥammad came into the world, no one had sought Him. The first to seek Him was Moḥammad – *God's blessings and peace be upon him!* And God, *He is exalted*, showed him gratitude in that:

*'(The Prophet's) eyes did not swerve, nor did they turn aside.'*²⁴¹

If you seek Him:

'The seeking is rejected and the path is blocked.'

But if you seek from Him, is it not enough for you that He has permitted you to talk of Him and to sit with His chosen people? Others he has put to sleep. You He has allowed into His royal court. He has busied others with seeking what is not He, while you He has busied with Himself and with serving His Friends."

‘Emrān said: "Oh Shaikh, is He not generous?"

The Shaikh replied:

"He is generous who gives before he is asked, and forgives before being presented with excuses.

Oh ‘Emrān, return home. The community is waiting for you."

‘Emrān bowed and departed.

A shout and a cry rose up from the group of darvishes. Most of them fell into a swoon and the Shaikh was weeping. Someone asked: "Oh Shaikh, what is to become of us sinners?"

He replied: "Oh generous fellow, the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

Book Two, Chapter One

'God and His angels show mercy to those who confess their sins.'"

'Emrān went on until he reached the *pirs*. They were still seated the same way. 'Emrān described what happened when the Shaikh laid eyes on him, and what the Shaikh said: "I had not even posed the question, when he gave me the answer."

All the *pirs* of Transoxania who had been seated there, got up and, out of respect for the Shaikh, placed their faces on the ground in the direction of Meyhana. *God sanctify their souls!*

* * *

It has been related that a certain darvish set out from Iraq and came to Meyhana to see our Shaikh Abu Sa'id – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When the darvish arrived in Meyhana, the Shaikh was in Bādana which is a village two *farsangs*²⁴² from Meyhana. The darvish didn't stop in Meyhana but headed for Bādana. He met the Shaikh along the way. Making obeisance, he kissed the Shaikh's feet and placed his hand on the Shaikh's thigh and walked along in attendance on the Shaikh's stirrup.

Then he posed the question: "Oh Shaikh, what is the *pir's* right with respect to the disciple, and what is the disciple's right with respect to the *pir*?"

The Shaikh didn't answer at that moment.

Thus, they returned to Meyhana and the following day the Shaikh came forth to speak before an assembly. To begin with he said to that darvish: "You must put on your shoes this moment and go to Ġaznin²⁴³ to see Shaikh Morid and ask him for one hundred gold dinars for the Sufis' debts, as well as two maunds²⁴⁴ of aloes-wood."

Straightway the darvish put on his shoes and went to Ġaznin and delivered the Shaikh's message. He received the gold along with the incense and departed.

When he reached Herat, he went to the bath with a darvish from Herat. There was a good looking boy in the bath and the first darvish took a liking to him. He told this to the darvish from Herat, who said: "It requires some money. Then we can bring him to the room this evening and be with him in private."

The first darvish gave the other one two gold dinars. The man from Herat made the arrangements and brought the boy home that evening. Then the first darvish came and they had something

to eat and they were together in private. When he made advances on the boy, the darvish saw Shaikh Bu Sa'id emerge from one corner of the room, and the Shaikh shouted at him: "Ho! Refrain from this deed!"

The darvish let out a shout and fell unconscious. When he came back to his senses, he immediately asked for his shoes and set out for Meyhana. He arrived in Meyhana while the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly. The darvish, still wearing his shoes, came before the Shaikh and when the Shaikh laid eyes on him, he said: "The *pir's* right with respect to the disciple is this. When you are told to go to Ġaznin for the benefit of the darvishes, you do so, in accordance with the *pir's* instructions. And the disciple's right with respect to the *pir* is this. When you commit an error like that along the way, the *pir* stops you from such an impropriety."

The darvish fell to the ground. He repented and sought forgiveness and remained in attendance upon the Shaikh.

* * *

KVāja 'Aliyak-e Dar-e 'Azra²⁴⁵ has related:

"I was in Nishapur. I felt a longing to see the Shaikh. I put on my shoes and set out from Nishapur. After one whole day and night²⁴⁶ I came to Meyhana. When I reached the edge of Meyhana, I wanted to perform a major ablution before entering Meyhana and meeting the Shaikh.

As I approached the edge of the river, I saw a darvish coming. And I had still not taken off my shoes. The darvish announced: 'The Shaikh says to come as you are.'"

KVāja 'Aliyak goes on to relate: "Just as I was, I went before the Shaikh. The Shaikh was seated on the raised platform in his sepulchral shrine²⁴⁷. He said: 'Bring a stool so that he may remove his shoes here.'

A stool was brought and placed before the Shaikh and there in the very presence of the Shaikh they removed my shoes. The Shaikh said: 'Give them to me.'

They gave him the shoes. The Shaikh kissed them and touched them to his head. And he took my socks and pressing them against his cheeks, said: 'Great is the man who takes one step for the sake of "this affair"²⁴⁸.'

Then he said: 'Don't imagine you have chosen to come. It is I who have brought you.'"

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly. A detractor had come and seated himself behind a column and was watching. He beheld the Shaikh sitting on his raised platform with stately cushions around him and saw how the Shaikh made a clear display of his miraculous powers, as he spoke. Secretly the man observed the Shaikh speaking and in his heart he disapproved.

The Shaikh turned towards the column and said: "Oh you who are sitting behind the mosque column, empty your heart of disapproval and come forward."

The man came out from behind the column, let out a cry and said: "What lordliness this is! This is all lordliness!"

The Shaikh replied: "No, you are mistaken. This is sheer lack of power to choose!"²⁴⁹

An outcry arose from the gathering, and this man repented of his disapproval and became a devotee of our Shaikh.

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Fath, the Shaikh's grandson, has related:

"I grew up in attendance upon the Shaikh and had witnessed his mystic state. Having heard about the ascetic disciplines he practiced early on, I imagined that his mystic states were the fruit of that struggle for spiritual purification. Thus, the thought occurred to me to lead a good life and to undertake ascetic practices in secret. I said to myself: 'The starting point lies in scrupulous observance with regard to food, for God, *He is sublime and exalted*, ordered the prophets:

*"Oh prophets, eat of lawful foods and undertake proper actions."*²⁵⁰

Since proper action is the result of licit food, my best course is to eat what I earn with my own hands and not to eat the bread of the Sufis.'

But I was unacquainted with any work or profession.

There was a man called Amira in our neighborhood, who kept a large mill²⁵¹. I went to him in secret and learned how to weave reed baskets. Every day at the hottest hour, when the Shaikh took

his nap and the companions lay down, I stole off to the countryside and brought back a quantity of reed. I would weave baskets and having sold them, buy barley with the money. Then I would grind my own flour with a handmill and sift it myself.

I was constantly fasting and when I broke my fast, I would sit with the Sufis for dinner but I would secretly take one piece of that barley bread out of my sleeve and hide it under the other bread. And that's what I would eat. At dinner I always sat far away from the Shaikh, so that he wouldn't see what I was doing. At the same time I performed extra ritual ablutions and prayers and increased my ascetic practices.

Since no one was aware of what I was doing, I imagined the Shaikh knew nothing about this either. Furthermore, as the Shaikh didn't say anything to me about this matter, my assumption seemed to be confirmed -- until the time that the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was traveling from Meyhana to Nishapur.

When the Shaikh reached Ṭus, there was a certain 'Alavi²⁵² named Bu Ṭāleb-e Ja'fari in that city and the Shaikh loved him very dearly, so much so that when Bu Ṭāleb was on hand, the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, would only take meals with him. Then the Shaikh, together with Sayyed Bu Ṭāleb, went from Ṭus to Nowqān²⁵³.

Both of them were sitting on a raised platform, eating a meal. In Nowqān there was an ascetic who, as soon as he heard the Shaikh had come to the city, went to greet him. When this ascetic greeted the Shaikh with 'salaam', the Shaikh returned his greeting but paid him no further attention. The ascetic was greatly distressed, since he wished to increase his dignity through these men. In this state of distress, he left the Shaikh and went outside. Sayyed Bu Ṭāleb remarked: 'Oh Shaikh, you paid no attention to this ascetic of ours.'

Our Shaikh replied: 'There's no need for ascetics! No need for ascetics! No need for ascetics!'

Then he added: 'Oh Sayyed, don't associate with bigots²⁵⁴, for they are denunciators at God's royal court. At their bidding He seizes men but He does not release men at their bidding. And so, this group causes further trouble for mankind.'

Then he turned to me and said:

'If you go there, mind that you don't mention me! Be as a speck of dust at that royal court. That is, if you go to the world beyond don't say: "I am one of the Shaikh's followers."

Book Two, Chapter One

You are directing your footsteps along the path of asceticism and undertaking action on your own without following your shaikh."

KVāja Abu'l-Fath goes on to relate:

"When the Shaikh said these words, I fell to the ground and, out of fear of what he'd said, I lost consciousness. Then I wept and begged for forgiveness until the Shaikh was satisfied with me in his heart. Then the Shaikh said: 'Renounce what you were doing.'

I replied: 'I have renounced it.'

After that the group of Sufis asked me what this was all about. I described what I had been doing. Everyone was amazed that during that period of time no one had been aware of what was happening except the Shaikh -- through his miraculous powers."

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Qāsem-e Ḥakim was a man of spiritual distinction in Saraks. He had a group of disciples, all of whom were highly esteemed persons. When our Shaikh's fame reached Saraks and his spiritual states were being reported to them every day, they were eager to know about the Shaikh and what mystic rank he had attained. One day they sat together and were talking about the Shaikh. One of them said: "He is a great man."

But someone else said: "His house lies on the other side of the mountain."

That is to say, he is from the countryside and people from the countryside are of no significance.

Yahyā the Turk was a man of distinction. He said: "It is not your part to speak of what is unknown. I shall go to Meyhana and glance down²⁵⁵ on him to see just who he is."

Then Yahyā set off in that direction. The group escorted him out of the city and bade him farewell, saying: "Take a careful look to see what sort of man he is and why such a high reputation concerning him has reached us."

Yahyā arrived in Meyhana. It was morning and the Shaikh was in the pulpit. When Yahyā entered the mosque, the Shaikh caught sight of him. The Shaikh said: "Welcome, oh Yahyā. So you have come to glance down on me? Now, indeed, you must look up at me. The darvishes cannot be left waiting. What was it those generous fellows said to you, as you were setting out?"

Yahyā replied: "Let the Shaikh tell."

The Shaikh said: "They told you: 'See what sort of a man he is.'"

He said: "Yes, they did."

The Shaikh said: "And have you seen?"

Yahyā replied: "I have seen."

The Shaikh asked: "What will you tell them?"

Yahyā replied: "Whatever the Shaikh says is best."

The Shaikh said: "Go and tell them: 'I have seen a man who has no strings on his purse and has no quarrel with men at large.'"

Yahyā let out a cry and fell unconscious. When he had recovered himself, he rose to his feet. He made obeisance and departed.

When he returned before KVāja Bu'l-Qāsem-e Ḥakim and the group of Sufis, he described what he had seen. Everyone in the group experienced an ecstatic state and was filled with joy. All together, they turned in the direction of Meyhana and placed their faces on the ground out of respect for the magnanimity and grandeur of the Shaikh's spiritual state -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

* * *

It has been related that one time our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, set out for Marv. KVāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz was the servant²⁵⁶ of the Sufis and Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Siyāh was the spiritual director of the group. When they heard of the Shaikh's arrival, Pir Bu 'Ali came to KVāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz and said: "That bird is arriving."

He replied: "Yes, he is."

Pir Bu 'Ali said: "He will pick up the grain that lies before me and you!"

They discussed this for a while and then said: "We must arrange a reception and go forth to welcome him."

KVāja 'Ali prepared a fine reception for the Shaikh and even purchased two well-fed donkeys and slaughtered them for the dogs of the neighborhood. His assistant asked: "Why have you done this?"

He replied: "Since such a king is arriving, let even the dogs of the neighborhood grease their jaws."

Then they went out to welcome the Shaikh.

The Shaikh wished to put up at the *rebāḥ*²⁵⁷ of 'Abdollāh-e Mobārak -- *God have mercy on him!* But Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Siyāh said:

Book Two, Chapter One

"Every year we wait upon a thousand owls in the hope that one falcon will arrive. Now so great a falcon has arrived. We will not allow him to alight somewhere else."

Our Shaikh replied: "There is need here for generosity! All are falcons. No one is an owl."

Pir Bu 'Ali said: "The Shaikh has shown us to ourselves. Had he not done so, we would have come to be destroyed."

After that our Shaikh entered the city and alighted at the *kāna-qāh*. Then he sat on the raised platform and the elders sat down in front of him, while the young men stood drawn up in a line.

The Shaikh began to speak. *K^Vāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz* experienced jealousy. Then Bu 'Ali-ye *Siyāh* came in with his followers and saw our Shaikh seated on the raised platform. He beheld the Shaikh's majesty and fearsome authority and the young men drawn up in a line and the elders in attendance upon him. Then he sat down in front of the Shaikh and the following thought passed through his heart: "If the people see him and hear his words and behold his awesome authority, I will lose my spiritual domain and lose the people of Marv."

Our Shaikh immediately turned to *K^Vāja 'Ali* and said: "Oh *K^Vāja*, go out to your bazaar. They cook fine chapatis. Bring me a chapati, one as fine as your face!"

K^Vāja 'Ali ran out and straightway brought back a fine chapati. The Shaikh took the chapati and turning to Pir Bu 'Ali-ye *Siyāh*, said: "Here now! I have sold you Marv and the domain of Marv for this chapati and I give you the chapati to keep as well."

And he gave him the chapati and our Shaikh immediately left Marv and would not stay there. They entreated him at great length, saying: "May the Shaikh at least stay long enough for us to serve the dinner."

The Shaikh said: "We will go to the *rebāt* of 'Abdollāh-e Mobārak."

And he would not remain there but went to the *rebāt*.

K^Vāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz served the dinner in the countryside and when they were finished eating, the Shaikh departed in the direction of Meyhana.

* * *

My father, Nur al-Din-e Monavvar, *God have mercy on him*, said that he heard the following from K^Vāja Bu'l-Fath-e Šeyk, who has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was seated on the raised platform in front of his sepulchral shrine²⁵⁸, speaking before an assembly. In the midst of his discourse he said: 'A breeze is blowing from Paradise and that can only be in accompaniment to the steps of darvishes.'

And the Shaikh went on with his discourse.

Once again he said: 'A breeze is blowing from Paradise and that can only be in accompaniment to the steps of darvishes.'

And he went on with his discourse and then made the same remark a third time.

K^Vāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, 'Abd al-Karim and the group of Sufis rose to their feet. They realized that darvishes were arriving, when the Shaikh said these words three times. And they set out to go to the head of the village²⁵⁹. The Shaikh pointed to the right and said: 'You must go that way.'

They went where the Shaikh pointed.

Darvishes were arriving from Marv. When the group caught sight of them, they embraced them and then came back. When they came before the Shaikh, he said: 'Oh Ḥasan, bring me their shoes.'

Ḥasan took their shoes and brought them to the Shaikh. The Shaikh received them and holding them over his head, recited:

'If a fellow deserves to have his clothes carried off,
It's because he takes what is large for what is small.

God bless Moḥammad and his family, one and all.'

And the Shaikh drew his hand over his face²⁶⁰ and brought the assembly to a close. A great cry arose from the gathering."

* * *

K^Vāja Abu Bakr-e Mo'addeb was the tutor in letters of our Shaikh's children and an intimate disciple of our Shaikh. He has related:

Book Two, Chapter One

"I was in Meyhana in attendance upon the Shaikh. One day in the spring it rained heavily. When it rains in Meyhana, a torrent arises. Towards the afternoon prayers our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, declared: 'Time to play in the water!'

All of us in the group set out. And I was the tutor in letters of the Shaikh's children. We all walked along with the Shaikh to the edge of the river. There the Shaikh stopped and said: 'Everybody play in the water!'

The whole group jumped in the water. I stood there with the Shaikh. I had on fine clothes and was looking at the Shaikh. While I was doing that, Hasan-e Mo'addeb came up behind me and put his head between my legs. Lifting me up, he carried me to the edge of the river and threw me in the water.

I sank down into the water and I didn't know how to swim. Meanwhile, my turban and my shoes were carried away by the water and all my clothes were drenched. Then I lost consciousness. I was no longer aware of myself or the world.

They lifted me from the water and held my head down. When the water came out through my throat and I had regained consciousness a bit, the Shaikh exclaimed: 'Time for prayers over the dead!'

I was brought and laid down before the Shaikh. The Shaikh spread his own prayer-rug over my face. The group of Sufis stood in a straight line and the Shaikh recited four *takbirs*²⁶¹ over me, as a prayer for the dead. Then squatting beside me, he lifted one edge of the prayer-rug from my face and said to me: 'Oh Bu Bakr, rise up after being dead and speak.'

When the Shaikh had said this, he got up to go. They helped him onto a donkey and he departed. Then just as I was, with a sheet wrapped about me, I set out with the Shaikh and left the group of darvishes where they were. The Shaikh went into his house and didn't come out that evening for dinner.

The following morning he came forth and sat on the raised platform to speak in front of an assembly. Before beginning his discourse, he said to Hasan-e Mo'addeb: 'Rise to your feet.'

Hasan stood up. The Shaikh said: 'Put on your shoes. You must go to Balk. Take twelve days going and twelve days to come back, and stay in Balk one day. On the twenty-fifth day, you must be back here. Bu 'Amr Hasku from Nishapur is there. Give him my greetings and tell him three maunds²⁶² of fragrant aloes-wood are required, to be used during the Sufis' dinner, and that the debts

amount to one hundred dinars. Take that sum of money and bring it.'

Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb set off and when he reached the place called Zardak-e Dāğ, it was the period of the Torkomān raids²⁶³. The Torkomāns captured Ḥasan and beat him and treated him with indignity, accusing him of being a spy. They held him one whole day and night in bonds, keeping him spread-eagled.

Ḥasan has related:

'In that cold and suffering, I befouled myself. At midnight, I called out to the Shaikh in supplication: "Oh Shaikh, give me assistance!"

Immediately after I said these words, the commander of the Torkomāns came out of his room and undid my hands and feet. He sent me into a felt tent. Warm water was brought for me to wash with and they gave me back my clothes to put on. Then the commander brought me into his felt tent and said: "Tell me who you are."

I replied: "I am the disciple of the ascetic of Meyhana who is called Shaikh Bu Sa'id."

He asked me: "What does he look like?"

I described the Shaikh and the commander said: "This very moment I beheld that old man in a dream, just as you described him. He held a naked sword and said to me: 'Let this man go or I shall cut off your head this instant!'

I came immediately and released you."

Straightway he gave me back my shoes and prayer-rug with my affairs, saying: "Go wherever you wish."

I went on to Balk. Bu 'Amr Ḥasku had gone to Ġaznin²⁶⁴. I departed and on the morning of the twenty-fifth day, as the Shaikh had instructed me, I reached the outskirts of Meyhana. That morning the Shaikh said from the pulpit: "Ḥasan has come. Go out and welcome him."

All the Shaikh's children and the company of Sufis came forth into the countryside to welcome me. Then I went with them before the Shaikh and he said: "Welcome, oh Ḥasan. Will you tell or shall I?"

I replied: "It would be better, if the Shaikh spoke."

He said: "I knew you wouldn't find Bu 'Amr but you went and on your way the Torkomāns captured you. They tied you up and beat you and you underwent much suffering. That night they kept you spread-eagled. You called on me in supplication and I came

and released you. Then you went to Balk but didn't meet Bu 'Amr.'"

Hasan goes on to relate: 'I said: "Oh Shaikh, since you knew it would be this way, why were you seeking this poor wretch's suffering?"

The Shaikh replied: "Oh Hasan, a carnal soul such as threw Bu Bakr in the water that day, was more than I could subdue. To subdue a soul like that the Torkomān's club²⁶⁵ was necessary. All these arrangements were for the sole purpose of chastising that carnal soul.'"

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, once went to Saraks and stayed in the *kānaqāh* of Pir Bu'l-Faẓl-e Hasan. At that time, the custodian of the *kānaqāh* was a person named Bu'l-Hasan...²⁶⁶ and the *kānaqāh* had no resources. The custodian thought to himself: "What am I to do and what course am I to adopt? A man of such rank has come and he is accompanied by so large and distinguished a group. Where will I find something I can use for the expenses?"

The custodian has related: "When this thought had occurred in my heart, the Shaikh called me and said: 'Oh Bu'l-Hasan, come here!'

I went before the Shaikh and he said: 'Oh Bu'l-Hasan, you must go to the bazaar, to the shop of so-and-so the money-changer. Tell him Bu Sa'id says to weigh out thirty dinars of gold and give it to you.'

I went and told this to the money-changer. The money-changer immediately counted out thirty gold Nishapuri dinars and gave them to me. I brought the money to the Shaikh who said: 'Go and spend it!'

I went off and spent it. The following day the Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu'l-Hasan, go to that money-changer and get another thirty dinars and spend it.'

I did as the Shaikh ordered.

The third day the Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu'l-Hasan, go back to the same money-changer and have him give you another thirty dinars, as well as a separate sum of ten dinars to hire donkeys for the journey from here to Nishapur.'"

The custodian has related: "I went to the money-changer and said: 'Give me thirty dinars and give me a separate sum of ten dinars.'

The money-changer replied: 'What is this? That is not how you asked me for money the other days.'

I said: 'The Shaikh is leaving for Nishapur. If tomorrow you're going to claim your gold from me, rise and ask for it now, before the Shaikh leaves.'

The money-changer came with me to the Shaikh. The Sufis had put on their shoes and loaded up the donkeys. The money-changer stood in front of the Shaikh. The Shaikh, however, didn't say anything but mounted his horse and set out.

The money-changer followed after the Shaikh as far as the city gate. When the Shaikh went out through the gate, the money-changer felt sore at heart. When the Shaikh had gone through the gate with his followers and they reached the road for Nishapur, we saw that a caravan was arriving from Nishapur. A man who was in front of the caravan, came before our group and after greeting us with 'salaam', he asked: 'Who is this person?'

He was told: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr.'

He said: 'Take me before the Shaikh.'

The man came before the Shaikh and greeted him with 'salaam'. The Shaikh returned his greeting and straightway said: 'Give the one hundred dinars to this man.'

And the Shaikh pointed to the money-changer. The man, in tears, extending his hand from his robes, immediately brought forth a purse with one hundred dinars and gave it to the money-changer. The latter took the gold. Our Shaikh said: 'Have you received what you were after?'

The money-changer answered: 'I have received it.'

The Shaikh said: 'Be off!'

The money-changer said: 'I am not able to leave you. Admit me into your good graces.'

The Shaikh replied: 'I have admitted you.'

Thus, the money-changer's affairs turned out well, in this world and in the world to come. And we left the Shaikh and returned to the city."

* * *

Qāzi Seyfi was one of the reputed judges and religious leaders in Saraks. He adhered to the Hanafi doctrines of jurisprudence and

Book Two, Chapter One

disapproved of all Sufis. In particular, he strongly disapproved of the Shaikh. When our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Saraks on his way to Nishapur, he stayed there a certain time and Qāzi Seyfi was the judge of the district of Saraks. He was very rich and enjoyed the highest degree of respect.

Several times he tried to engage people promising them riches, if they would assassinate the Shaikh. But no one dared conceive of such a thought in his heart and our Shaikh was left in peace.

Then one day a certain person accepted the offer and the *qāzi* having promised him a considerable sum of money, gave him some cash in advance. They agreed upon the day the person would strike the Shaikh down in secret and that day our Shaikh was speaking before an assembly.

The same day Qāzi Seyfi was also going to speak before an assembly and from the minarets of the city it was announced: "Qāzi Seyfi will speak before an assembly at such-and-such a place. Come to attend!"

When the Shaikh heard the announcement, he said: "Get ready to recite the prayers for the dead over the *qāzi*."

The people were very surprised, thinking: "Qāzi Seyfi is fit and in good health and is about to speak before an assembly. But the Shaikh says we are going to recite prayers over his corpse."

Having said these words, the Shaikh went on with his discourse.

Meanwhile, Qāzi Seyfi was in the bathhouse performing his ablutions before speaking at the gathering.

A few days previous, a peasant had sworn an oath to divorce his wife and then acted in contradiction to the oath²⁶⁷. But the *qāzi* had separated him from his wife and put him in prison for a while, taking the whole of the dowry from him. And the peasant was then released.

This peasant had come to the city and brought his scythe to the blacksmith to have it sharpened. Now he was about to return to his village.

Meanwhile, Qāzi Seyfi came out of the bathhouse and was on his way to speak before an assembly. The peasant met him at the bathhouse door. He saw that the *qāzi* was alone and the peasant's heart was full of rancor. He swung his scythe and tore open Qāzi Seyfi's belly. Straightway the *qāzi* fell to the ground and died.

The news spread that Qāzi Seyfi had been killed, and the Shaikh was still speaking before an assembly. The people were amazed because of the Shaikh's prediction. The Shaikh said:

"He pronounced judgement on me. Who was he to me?
I pronounced judgement on him. Who was he to God?"

* * *

Shaikh 'Omar-e Šowkāni has related:

"Kvāja Moḥammad, the father of Kvāja Imam Aḥmad-e Mālekān-e Šowkāni, wore a tunic and a hat²⁶⁸ in his youth. One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was seated and Kvāja Moḥammad passed in front of our Shaikh with his tunic and hat on. The Shaikh noticed him and said: 'That young man in the tunic is not genuine'²⁶⁹."

Kvāja Moḥammad was informed of this remark and said: 'It is as the Shaikh has declared and for some time now this point has been distressing me inwardly.'

When a short time had gone by, he repented and made a house into a *kānaqāh*. He spent much wealth on behalf of the Shaikh and the mystic community and for some time served the darvishes. In his *kānaqāh* in Šowkān he lodged forty Sufis and served them using his own personal wealth. He also constructed a dome and a minaret for the congregational mosque in Šowkān -- both at his own expense.

Over the entrance to his house he had a room full of wheat. He used this wheat to pay the master builder and workers and to pay for the baked bricks and everything else. But he said to himself: 'This wheat will not be sufficient for the construction.'

For he knew how much wheat he had put in the room. But the two building works were completed and there was still wheat left over in the room. He was very surprised because he was sure that the wheat he'd spent was many times as much as he'd stored in the apartment. He sent a man into the room to pour out the wheat and see how much it would come to.

The man went into the room and brought out a great amount of wheat. Now Kvāja Moḥammad was even more surprised. For this wheat that was still left was more than he had put in the room. The amount he'd spent for the construction work alone was beyond reckoning.

Book Two, Chapter One

Meanwhile, the man was still bringing out more wheat. Kvāja Moḥammad's patience came to an end. He asked: 'How much wheat is left in the room?'

The man said: 'Oh Kvāja, the room is still full of wheat!'

Kvāja Moḥammad was unable to keep this miracle to himself. He had engaged a tutor of letters for his children. Kvāja Moḥammad went to see this tutor, who was from Ṭus and was known as 'Abd al-Malek b. Šādān, the Qor'ānic reader. And he described the situation to the tutor.

The tutor of letters broke out in tears and said: 'It's not strange. This is a miracle of that shaikh whose disciple you are. He was giving you guidance in this way and had ordered you to perform this service. If you hadn't told me about it, no matter how much you or your children or your children's children had used from that room, it would have lasted until the day of resurrection. This was due to the Shaikh's blessed instructions and his pure glance -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*'"

* * *

I also heard the following from Shaikh 'Omar-e Šowkāni, who has related:

"One time our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was on his way from Meyhana to Ṭus. He set out on the Sardāva road and traveled via Darzāb-e Tāru. He wished to stop over in the village, Rafiqān. A darvish went on ahead to inform the people of the village that Shaikh Bu Sa'id was coming and to see if there was a kānaqāh the Shaikh and his company could put up at. If there was not, he was to arrange a place for the Shaikh and his followers to stay.

When the darvish arrived, there was no kānaqāh, for the people of the village and the region all practiced highway robbery and were bandits and malefactors. There was a school teacher in the village who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca and was a man of virtue. He supported himself on the money he collected by teaching the Qor'ān.

When he heard that the Shaikh was coming, he set off to meet him in the company of the darvish. Meanwhile, he explained to the darvish: The people here are highway robbers and malefactors and there is no kānaqāh. Moreover, the wealth of all the people in the village is unclean. I am the only man in the village who is

virtuous and whose money is licit. Otherwise, you will not find anybody who has one silver dirhem that is licit, or who has the slightest trace of piety.'

When the school teacher and the darvish came forth into the countryside and had gone a certain distance, they met the Shaikh. The teacher made obeisance and greeted the Shaikh with 'salaam'. The Shaikh returned his greeting and asked after his well-being.

Then the teacher said: 'Oh Shaikh, I have come because I heard that the Shaikh, by way of felicity, was arriving. But the people in our village are malefactors and highway robbers. In the whole village there is not one licit dirhem of silver, other than what I have received for teaching the Qor'ān. And there is no *kānaqāh* in this village and you will find no man of virtue except me. I am a virtuous man and have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Now the Shaikh must come and put up at my house, for other than my house, there is no place where the Shaikh can stay.'

The Shaikh said: 'We will put up at the house of the village headman.'

The school teacher exclaimed: 'Ha! He is the worst man in the whole village. He is the chief of all the highway robbers and thieves. His money is more unclean than anyone else's and he constantly drinks wine. There is not one rug in his whole house that is ritually clean for the Shaikh to sit on. Now let us see where the Shaikh will eat anything licit, other than at my house.'

Another darvish immediately ran ahead and told the village headman: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id is coming and intends to put up in your house.'

The headman straightway jumped up and put his servants to work to clean the house. They gathered the rugs and swept up. And he sent them to the mosque to bring clean rugs and spread them out. Meanwhile, he was running in and out of the house, greatly troubled at heart because he didn't have anything licit he could place before the Shaikh and the Sufis.

The headman had an aged mother. She said: 'What is it that's troubling your heart, that you are running in and out of doors like this?'

He replied: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr is coming from Meyhana and intends to put up here. Such a great man and a king is bestowing so great an honor on me but, as hard as I've thought, I cannot find amongst all my property something licit to offer him as hospitality. This is what distresses me.'

Book Two, Chapter One

The headman's mother was a woman of virtue. She extended her hand and removed a pair of bracelets from her arm and placed them before her son, saying: 'Take these. They are part of my licit inheritance from my mother. And she inherited them from her mother. The Shaikh is coming to your house with foreknowledge of this licit mouthful.'

The headman took the bracelets and used them to pay for the reception of the Shaikh and our companions. Meanwhile, due to what his mother had said, something was made firm in the headman's heart. When he saw the Shaikh and heard him speak, he repented at the Shaikh's hand, and the greater part of the people of the village repented of their wickedness and highway robbery – at the Shaikh's hand.

The headman secretly observed how much was spent on behalf of the Shaikh and the Sufis from the money he had procured from his mother's bracelets, and whether it fell short or was more than enough. This he did without saying anything to anyone. At the very moment this money came to an end, the Shaikh ordered: 'Saddle my horse!'

The headman and all the people beseeched the Shaikh at great length to remain a few more days, that the companions might be refreshed. But the Shaikh said: 'It is complete! You belong to me now.'

And the Shaikh departed.

Some time after this, Neẓām al-Molk²⁷⁰ bought Rafiqān and gave it in *vaqf*²⁷¹ to Ostād Bu Aḥmad's offspring, who were descended from our Shaikh through their mother. And so the village has remained, due to the blessing of our Shaikh's words."

* * *

I also heard the following from Shaikh 'Omar-e Šowkāni, who has related:

"In Azjāh there was a darvish named Ḥamza. He worked as a knife-maker and was a devotee of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He was highly esteemed. He was transported with love, ardent, given to weeping and quick to become impassioned.

Every day our Shaikh was to hold an assembly, Ḥamza would leave Azjāh at dawn on foot, in order to be present when the Shaikh came forth from his retreat to speak before the gathering. When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close, Ḥamza would

set out and return to Azjāh. He never missed any of the Shaikh's assemblies. Ḥamza was a poor man with a large family and the Shaikh was especially fond of him.

One day he was coming to the Shaikh's assembly in Meyhana and he had a gold coin in his purse. When he reached the edge of Meyhana, he thought to himself: 'If I bring this gold coin with me and someone asks the Shaikh for a gift, it's sure the Shaikh will know I have something in my purse. He will say: "Oh Ḥamza, you have a gold coin in your purse, of such-and-such a weight. Give it to this poor man."

I will be obliged to give it away in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions and my children will be left without means.'

He took the coin out of his purse and hid it in a hole he dug in the earth at the foot of Meyhana's fortification wall. And then he went to our Shaikh's assembly.

The Shaikh began to speak and when he was half-way through his discourse, he turned to Ḥamza and said: 'Oh Ḥamza, rise to your feet! A thief is about to steal the gold coin you hid at the foot of the fortification wall.'

Ḥamza got up and went to where he'd hidden the gold coin. There he saw a man who was overturning the earth and was close to where the coin lay. He was about to snatch it and carry it off. Ḥamza came forward and recovered the gold coin. He brought it to the Shaikh and put it down before him.

After this it came to pass that Ḥamza could not endure to be without the Shaikh's company. He moved his entire home and family to Meyhana and as long as the Shaikh was alive, Ḥamza remained in attendance upon him in Meyhana. When the Shaikh passed away, Ḥamza returned to Azjāh. His tomb is located there. It is a precious, grace-bestowing pilgrimage site."

* * *

Nezām al-Molk²⁷², *God have mercy on him*, had founded a *kānaqāh* in the city of Isfahan and appointed Amir Sayyed Moḥammad, a learned 'Alavi²⁷³ and a Sufi, to be the attendant in charge of the *kānaqāh*.

Every year it was the custom for religious scholars, *sayyeds*, Sufis, and people with needs and grant holders to come from all over the world and gather in the *kānaqāh*. When the month of Rajab began, Nezām al-Molk would call Sayyed Moḥammad and tell him to present everybody's needs, one after the other.

Neẓām al-Molk would order whatever was appropriate for each person in the way of stipends, pensions, gifts and grants. Thus, by the month of Ramaẓān, everyone would return home with his needs satisfied and busy himself offering up prayers on Neẓām al-Molk's behalf.

One year the month of Rajab came to an end but no one had attained his desire. The month of Ša'bān went by and still Neẓām al-Molk didn't see to a single person's needs. Then the month of Ramaẓān arrived but he didn't summon anyone from the group or make mention of them.

All at once, the group began to talk and everyone had something to say. There were those who maintained Neẓām al-Molk was preoccupied with some problem. Others said: "Could anyone have slandered us or invented tall tales about us?"

When the month of Ramaẓān came to an end and they caught sight of the new moon of the month of Šavvāl²⁷⁴, that night Neẓām al-Molk sent a messenger to tell Sayyed Moḥammad: "When you have finished dinner, come to me in private with ten of the important Sufis and imams. There are certain matters and events I wish to tell you about."

Sayyed Moḥammad has related:

"When we had finished dinner, I chose ten of the shaikhs and imams and we went before Neẓām al-Molk towards the hour of the bedtime prayers. We were worried about what would happen. When we entered, we saw Neẓām al-Molk sitting on a prayer-rug with a candle placed in front of him. We greeted him with 'salaam' and he received us with great honor and respect. He then went on to relate the following:

'Know that in my early youth I was engaged in religious studies but the matter did not turn out as I had wished, for my family, friends and relatives kept me from studying. I said to my father: "You should send me to Marv, for there will be no one there to distract me and my studies will progress better."

My father consented and sent me off with one servant and a donkey, saying: "When you reach Azjāh, ask the people in the caravan to stop and wait for you for one day. Meanwhile, go to Meyhana to see Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr and pay him your respects. Pay close attention to what he says and remember it. Do everything he orders and ask him to assist you with his blessing."

When the caravan reached Azjāh, I asked them to wait there one day while I went and paid my respects to Shaikh Bu Sa'id.

They consented to this and I set out for Meyhana with my servant. At dawn the following day I arrived outside Meyhana.

When I laid eyes on Meyhana, the entire countryside appeared to be deep blue because of the great number of Sufis dressed in blue²⁷⁵ who had come forth and were sitting everywhere in groups. I was amazed and wondered why so many Sufis had all come forth together and were sitting scattered about.

When I drew near and they caught sight of me from a distance, they all stood up and came towards me. Upon reaching me, each one of them in succession greeted me with "salaam" and embraced me. Then they escorted me to Meyhana. Meanwhile, I asked them: "What does this mean? Why have you come forth from the town?"

They replied: "Hear the good news. This morning after we had performed the prayers, the Shaikh said: 'Whoever wishes to see the young man who shall devour this world with success and conquer the world to come, go out to the Azjāh road to welcome him.' We have all come forth to meet you."

Hearing these words, I immediately experienced an ecstatic state and wept profusely. And I walked on, accompanied by the group, until I came before the Shaikh. Just as I was, they took me to the Shaikh. I made obeisance and greeting the Shaikh with "salaam", kissed his hand. The Shaikh looked at me and said: "Welcome! May this prove a blessing, my child! Lordship over the world has been assured for you. Give yourself to action, for action summons you. On the path you are presently traveling, nothing has been allotted you. Soon, however, students of the religious sciences shall reach their goals due to you. Do you give me your word that you will cherish the mystic community?"

I replied: "Ḥasan²⁷⁶ does not deserve this honor that the Shaikh's blessed lips have conferred. I swear I shall be as the dust beneath their feet!"

Then I wept profusely. The Shaikh lowered his head and I remained standing there in a posture of respect. After a while the Shaikh raised his head and said: "Oh child, are you still standing there?"

I replied: "Oh Shaikh, I have a question."

He said: "Ask it."

I asked: "Is there a sign that will indicate when this work the Shaikh has commanded is about to come to an end, so that I may make up for what has been neglected?"

Book Two, Chapter One

The Shaikh said: "Yes, there is. At whatever time divine assistance is withdrawn, the end of your life is at hand."

Then Neẓām al-Molk burst into tears and said: 'Oh men of distinction, each day since the beginning of the month of Rajab, I, Ḥasan, have been intending to pay out everyone's pensions, incomes and provisions and to see to the whole group's needs the same as every year but God, *He is sublime and exalted*, has not accorded me His divine assistance.

For three days and nights I have not left this place. I pray every night until morning and, with tears and humility, I beseech God, *He is exalted*, to accord unto me, Ḥasan, His divine assistance one more time, so that I may bestow largess upon His servants. I know the end of my life is at hand, as the Shaikh's blessed words have indicated.

Now, tomorrow, after performing the prayers in celebration of the end of Ramazān, you, Sayyed Moḥammad, must bring each group before the door of the treasury and present their needs, one by one, so that the whole company's wishes may be met with cash, and you must renew the stipend grants in the ministry, for the people must not go back to their districts, now that so little life remains unto Ḥasan."

Sayyed Moḥammad goes on to relate:

"The following day, after the prayers for the end of Ramazān, the sultan broke camp. Neẓām al-Molk himself stayed on for three more days. Meanwhile, in accordance with his orders, I saw to everyone's needs and I took the gold coins from the treasury and renewed the stipend grants.

On the fourth day KVāja Neẓām al-Molk set out after the sultan and when he reached Nahāvand, he was assassinated by the heretics²⁷⁷. *God have mercy on him!* Thus, everyone was deprived of his benevolence."

* * *

KVāja Imam Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi²⁷⁸, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"When I went to wait upon Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni²⁷⁹ and he ordered me to undertake various forms of ascetic practices and self-mortification, I became spiritually refined and disciplined, and experienced illuminations. He joined me as a brother to

Shaikh Abu Bakr-e ‘Abdollāh and sent both of us to Shaikh Bu Sa‘id-e Bu’l-Keyr in Meyhana.

When we reached Meyhana and had performed those rites and customs which are required upon arrival, we went before the Shaikh. The Shaikh ordered Ḥasan-e Mo‘addeb to bring a piece of cloth and give it to me. And the Shaikh ordered me: ‘Remove the dust from the walls.’

And he ordered Bu Bakr-e ‘Abdollāh: ‘Arrange the darvishes’ shoes in order.’

When we had performed this service for three days, on the fourth day the Shaikh ordered: ‘You must return to Shaikh Bu’l-Qāsem.’

We returned before Shaikh Bu’l-Qāsem and when some time had gone by and both shaikhs had passed over to the mercy of God, *He is sublime and exalted*, the doors of eloquent speech opened for me. Disciples appeared. I was accorded approval and my fame and reputation spread through the world.

Shaikh Bu Bakr-e ‘Abdollāh, despite his greatness, did not acquire renown and a high reputation, nor was his name spread abroad. One day Bu Bakr-e ‘Abdollāh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said: ‘Shaikh Bu Sa‘id ordered Kṽāja Imam Bu ‘Ali: “Clean the dust from the walls with a cloth.”

And all his life he has been cleaning the dust of sin from the walls of the hearts of God’s servants with the cloth of his true speech.

The Shaikh ordered me to arrange the darvishes’s shoes in order and all my life I have remained in the vestibule²⁸⁰. No one has ever known me or made mention of my name.”

* * *

Amir Mas‘ud-e Banjar²⁸¹ was one of the great military commanders and sultans. There was no ruler in the border territories of greater distinction. One time Shaikh Abu Sa‘id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was faced with a considerable debt on behalf of the darvishes. The Shaikh sent Ḥasan before Ma‘sud to say:

“I have contracted debts of such-and-such an amount on behalf of the darvishes. You should free my heart of this care.”

When Ḥasan went before him and delivered the message, Mas‘ud received him very politely and said: “I shall free the Shaikh’s precious heart from these cares.”

Book Two, Chapter One

A few days after that Hasan went to see him and asked for the sum but Mas'ud put him off. Hasan went back several times and was always given some excuse. When the situation was no longer tolerable, the Shaikh wrote the following verses on a paper and gave them to Hasan to deliver:

"If you don't fulfill the promises you've made,
Though a lion, you won't escape from me alive."

Hasan-e Mo'addeb took the paper and placed it in Mas'ud-e Banjar's hand. When he had read it, his anger was aroused and he said: "What is the meaning of this?"

He drove Hasan from his presence and sent him away without satisfaction. Hasan came before the Shaikh and reported what had happened.

It was Mas'ud-e Banjar's custom to keep large and numerous Guri²⁸² hounds and whomever they caught, they instantly tore to pieces and destroyed. During the day they were kept chained up but nights they were let loose to roam about his tent. Whomever they caught, they tore to pieces.

When Hasan recounted what had happened, the Shaikh said nothing.

That night Mas'ud took it into his head to walk about the army and the tents of his retinue in secret, as is the practice of kings who wish to know what people are doing and saying. He got up at midnight, drew a fur cloak over his head, and wore the fur on the outside so no one would recognize him. Meanwhile, all his courtiers, retainers and attendants were asleep. Then he came out of his tent.

When he had taken a few steps, the hounds didn't recognize him because he'd turned the fur cloak inside out and put it over his head. They rushed at him and, in an instant, they tore him apart. He let out cries. Immediately, servants, retainers and attendants were aware and ran forth. By the time they reached him, the dogs had torn him to pieces and destroyed him.

* * *

Shaikh 'Abd al-Şamad b. Moĥammad al-Şufi of Saraks, who was an intimate disciple of our Shaikh, has recounted:

"Something caused me to be absent from our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's assembly for a time, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and I felt very sorry that I had missed his points of instruction.

When I returned to Meyhana, the Shaikh, seated on a raised platform, was speaking before an assembly. When the Shaikh's glance fell upon me, he said: 'Oh 'Abd al-Ṣamad, don't feel sorry. Though you were absent from me for ten years, I have only one phrase to say and that phrase could be written on this fingernail.'

And the Shaikh pointed to the nail of the middle finger of his right hand. 'And the phrase is this:

"Sacrifice the Self. If not, then no!"

When the Shaikh said these words, I let out a cry and fell unconscious."

* * *

It has been related that one time the company of Sufis in Meyhana had gone several days without meat. For more than a week Ḥasan did not procure any meat. Meanwhile, the group went on desiring meat, though they didn't show it openly.

One day our Shaikh rose to his feet and went forth with the company of Sufis through the gate that leads to the Marv road. Then they ascended the hill called Za'qal.

.....

This hill stands at the edge of the desert of Marv. Mention of it was made earlier on. Whenever a state of contraction came over the Shaikh, that is where he would go.

.....

When the Shaikh had ascended the hill, he came to a halt and waited a moment. A gazelle appeared out of the countryside and headed in the direction of the Shaikh and his followers. Coming before the Shaikh, she fell on the ground and rolled about. Tears flowed forth from the Shaikh's eyes and he said: "This should not be! This should not be!"

Meanwhile, the delicate gazelle continued to roll about on the ground in front of the Shaikh.

Then the Shaikh turned to the group and said: "Do you know what this gazelle is saying? She says: 'I have come to sacrifice my-

Book Two, Chapter One

self on behalf of the companions, that you may attain repose in your heart.'

And I say: 'This should not be because you have children.'

But she insists."

Then the Shaikh and our companions wept profusely. They let out shouts and ecstatic states were experienced. All the while the gazelle rolled about on the ground.

Then the Shaikh gave instructions to Ḥasan, saying: "Take her to the shop of Sa'īd, the butcher, and tell him to slaughter her with a sharp knife and in accordance with sacred custom, and to prepare a meal for the Sufis tonight."

Ḥasan did as the Shaikh had instructed him and that night the group of Sufis experienced pleasure and peace from the meat of that gazelle.²⁸³

* * *

KVāja Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi²⁸⁴, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"One time I was traveling from Ṭus to Meyhana with our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and a large group was with the Shaikh. On the way we reached the foot of a mountain. A huge snake, like a dragon, appeared and came towards us. We were all terrified and took to our heels.

The Shaikh, however, remained stationary on his horse. The snake came and rolled about at the feet of the Shaikh's horse, and we were watching from a distance. Now the Shaikh got off his horse and the dragon continued rolling on the ground.

I was closest to the Shaikh. The Shaikh halted there a while and then said: 'You have given yourself some trouble. Now go back!'

The dragon turned and departed, heading in the direction of the mountain. The group joined the Shaikh again and said: 'Oh Shaikh, what was this?'

The Shaikh replied: 'We were companions for several years on this mountain and acquired much spiritual comfort from one another. Now he learned that I was passing by. He has come and renewed our pact.

"Verily, keeping a pact is part of true faith."

Then the Shaikh said: 'Whoever travels the path of temperate character, everything shall come before him in temperance, as was the case of Abraham -- *God's blessings be upon him!* His path was one of temperate character. Consequently, fire²⁸⁵ approached him with his own gentleness.'

* * *

One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly. A poor man stood up in the assembly and asked for a maund²⁸⁶ of meat. There was a Turk in the audience who said: "I will donate the meat."

When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close, the poor man came before the Shaikh and made obeisance. The Shaikh asked: "Oh indigent fellow, what are you going to do with this meat you requested?"

The poor man replied: "I intend to cook a stew."

The Shaikh remarked: "Why did you say stew? You're about to make a stew of your affairs!"

Then the Turk gave him the meat and the poor man took it home.

When he came home, he found a stranger sitting with his wife in an improper fashion. The poor man could not restrain himself. He attacked with a knife and cut the man to pieces.

And he left the meat there and fled.

* * *

I have read the following written by the hand of Imam Mālekān, *God have mercy on him*:

"A woman having entered an ecstatic state during one of the Shaikh's assemblies, threw herself from the high roof²⁸⁷.

The Shaikh pointed. The woman remained suspended in mid-air.

The other women reached down and lifted her back onto the roof. When they looked, they saw that her skirt had caught on a small nail."

* * *

I have read the following in the handwriting of Ašraf Abu'l-Yamān, *God have mercy on him*:

Book Two, Chapter One

"Among those who disapproved of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, there was a certain tailor and a weaver. They were friends and when they met together, they would remark: 'There is no basis of truth to what this shaikh says or does.'

One day they said to one another: 'Since this man claims to have miraculous powers, let's go before him and see if the Shaikh knows what work we do and what our professions are. We'll soon learn whether he is true and whether what he does is based on a sound principle.'

Then they both went before the Shaikh, looking rather pensive. When the Shaikh's glance fell upon them, he said (verse):

'Here are two artisans waiting on tenterhooks.
One is a tailor, the other plies the loom.'

Then he pointed to the tailor and said: 'Now, he sews cloaks but only for kings.'

Next he pointed to the weaver and said: 'And this one only weaves black carpets.'

They were both put to shame and falling at the Shaikh's feet, repented of their former disapproval."

* * *

KVāja Imam 'Emād al-Din Moḥammad Bu'l-'Abbās-e Sadid, *God have mercy on him*, said:

"I was seven years old when I heard the following from my father -- *God have mercy on him!* He has related: 'Lady Māhak, the daughter of KVāja Hammuya who was the headman of Meyhana, has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Meyhana in front of his blessed sepulchral shrine²⁸⁸ -- *God cause the shrine to prosper!* That day our Shaikh was wearing a red woollen cloak. On his head he bore a white turban and his cheeks were rosy.

I gazed at him while he spoke and thought in my heart: 'Does the Lord, *He is sublime and exalted*, have any servant like our Shaikh throughout the world, or more handsome than him?'

As soon as this thought occurred in my heart, the Shaikh turned to me and said: 'Oh Moon²⁸⁹, don't think what you're thinking! If you want to know, take a look and see!'

And the Shaikh pointed to the tree which stands by the entrance to his sanctified sepulchral shrine – *God, He is exalted, cause the shrine to prosper!* I looked and saw a young man standing at the foot of the tree. He was black, withered and frail, the opposite of the Shaikh in appearance, and in a totally disheveled state. He was listening to the Shaikh's discourse.

I went on looking at him and said to myself: 'What can possibly be the reason for the Shaikh pointing out this fellow to me?'

I was thinking this over, when the Shaikh said: 'Moon, now return!'

I came back to my senses and the Shaikh said: 'A single hair of that fellow you see, is more precious to God, *He is exalted*, than this world and the world to come and all that is contained in this world and the world to come.

Take care never again to think what you were thinking. Of the servants who belong to the Lord, one possesses the color of the peacock and another the color of the crow.'""

* * *

Kvāja 'Emād al-Din Moḥammad has also related:

"One day Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly. Kvāja Imam Ḥasan-e Samarqandi came in and listened to the Shaikh's discourse. He thought to himself: 'What way is this for the Shaikh to speak!'

The Shaikh immediately turned to him and said: 'You have studied the *Ṣaḥīḥ*²⁹⁰ fifteen times. What is the last Tradition in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*?'

Kvāja Imam Ḥasan had heard²⁹¹ the *Ṣaḥīḥ* fifteen times. He was at a loss. As hard as he tried, he could not remember it. Our Shaikh said:

'Two utterances are light on the tongue but heavy in the scales and dear unto God: God is sublime, praise be to God! And God is sublime, God is magnificent!'

Kvāja Imam Ḥasan was discountenanced and put to shame. When he came forth, he said: 'I learned the *Ṣaḥīḥ* by heart fifteen times and have studied it that many times. Yet as hard as I tried, I couldn't recall the Tradition.'"

* * *

K^Vāja Imam ‘Emād al-Din Moḥammad also said he heard the following from his grandfather, Ostād Abu Bakr-e Nowqāni, who has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa‘id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and K^Vāja Ḥammuya and I were sitting in the Shaikh's mosque in Meyhana. A young man from Kotan²⁹² came in and said: 'Which of you is the chief man of Meyhana?'

The Shaikh pointed to K^Vāja Ḥammuya. The young man said: 'Introduce me to Islam!'

K^Vāja Ḥammuya said to the Shaikh: 'Introduce him to Islam.'

I exclaimed: 'Don't cause him such suffering. Release him from his bonds.'

The Shaikh said to me: 'You introduce him to Islam.'

This I did and the young man became a Muslim. Then I asked the man: 'What has brought this about?'

He replied: 'I and my brother set out from Kotan to go to Ṭabarestān²⁹³ to trade in goods. One night I had a dream and was told: "Rise and go to Meyhana and become a Muslim at the hand of the chief man of Meyhana."

I woke up and thought about this dream.

When we crossed to this side of the River²⁹⁴, my heart grew cold to trading and the affairs of the world. This intuition worked its effects in my heart and in my heart Islam appeared sweet. It became clear to me that my dream had been true.

I said to my brother: "Do as you wish with the merchandise and money."

I renounced everything and departed. I went on until I reached you and became a Muslim.'

The Shaikh turned to me -- for I had made a remark like a religious scholar²⁹⁵ -- and said:

'You have censured me. To make up for that, teach him enough of the Qor‘ān so that his prayers will be correct and teach him how to perform the ritual ablutions.'

I taught the young man to read up to the surah, The Morning Light²⁹⁶. When K^Vāja Ḥammuya returned home, everything he'd been wearing -- his *dorrā‘a*²⁹⁷, turban, tunic and loincloth, as well as his sash, boots and leggings -- he sent to the Shaikh, saying: 'Use these to pay for the young man's circumcision.'

The Shaikh called Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb and ordered him to sell the clothes and arrange a banquet for the darvishes. Then the young man was circumcised and he later came to rank among men of virtue.

* * *

Kvāja 'Abd al-Karim, who was the personal servant of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One day a certain darvish had me sit down and write some stories about our Shaikh for him. Someone came and said: 'The Shaikh wishes to see you.'

I went off and when I came before the Shaikh, he said: 'What were you just doing?'

I replied: 'A darvish asked for some stories about the Shaikh. I was writing them down.'

The Shaikh said: 'Oh 'Abd al-Karim, don't be a writer of stories. Be such that others tell stories about you.'"

.....

And these words contain several instructive points.

One is that, through his clairvoyance, the Shaikh knew what Kvāja 'Abd al-Karim was doing. Secondly, 'Abd al-Karim was given a lesson on how he should be. And thirdly, it shows that the Shaikh did not wish stories about his miracles to be written and spread abroad, thus causing him to become famous.

As this well-wisher mentioned in the beginning of the present book, shaikhs have always concealed their spiritual states.

* * *

In Azjāh there was a darvish by the name of Ḥamza, the knife-maker. He was a devotee of our Shaikh and mention of him was made earlier on. Every day the Shaikh was to hold an assembly, Ḥamza would come to Meyhana and when the Shaikh finished speaking, Ḥamza would return home.

Thursdays, however, when the assembly was over, Ḥamza would remain in Meyhana, so that the following Friday he could attend the congregational mosque in the Shaikh's company. Then when he had performed the Friday prayers, Ḥamza would set out for home again.

Book Two, Chapter One

Ḥamza was a very dear man and quick to grow passionate. But he was like a distraught lover.

At that time the group of Sufis had their "cell of retirement" where they would gather, in the room the Shaikh used as a mosque. On one occasion, at the hottest hour of the day²⁹⁸, Ḥamza came into the Shaikh's mosque. He made a big commotion and, in the roughest possible manner, slammed the mosque door against the wall. All the darvishes were distressed by this disturbance, and upset.

The Shaikh was aware of the situation and came forth, though it was not usual for him to appear at that hour. When the Shaikh came forth and the group beheld him, they were even more aroused and they complained about Ḥamza, saying: "He causes us disturbance."

The Shaikh ordered them to call Ḥamza. Ḥamza had gone to the bazaar. They went off and summoned him before the Shaikh. When Ḥamza came before the Shaikh, the Shaikh said: "Oh Ḥamza, the darvishes are complaining about you. They say you disturb their 'states' and that you are not acquiring proper manners. What have you to answer to this?"

Ḥamza replied: "Oh Shaikh, since they don't have the strength to support the burden of Ḥamza, they should take off their porter's robes²⁹⁹, for they put on the porter's robe in order to carry burdens."

The Shaikh experienced a flush of joy and let out a shout. Then he said: "Say it again!"

Ḥamza repeated what he had said. The Shaikh let out another shout and said: "Say it again!"

Ḥamza repeated what he said a third time and the Shaikh again gave a shout. Then the Shaikh ordered Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to bring some sugar.

Hasan brought a tray of sugar before the Shaikh. With his own blessed hand the Shaikh poured the sugar over Ḥamza's head, all the while letting out shouts and saying:

"Whoever cannot bear vexation, let him take off the porter's robe!"

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, once came to Bāvard but intended to pass it by. In

Bāvard there was an *‘arif*³⁰⁰ who had repented. He came before the Shaikh and said: "Would it not be possible for the Shaikh to stay here a few days so that good might come to the people and grace from the Shaikh might remain behind?"

The Shaikh consented and stayed there for a period of thirty days. Every day in the morning, the *‘arif* brought one gold dinar and gave it to Ḥasan, saying: "Use this for providing meals for the darvishes."

Ḥasan spent the money. Meanwhile, the people raised objections and everyone had something to say about this. The Shaikh, as was his custom, made no comment.

When thirty days had passed, the Shaikh said: "Now let us depart!"

The Shaikh's horse was brought and then -- lest the people who had been raising objections, end up in Hell-fire because of their mistrust, and in order to clear up everyone's doubts -- our Shaikh said in front of the group: "Summon the *‘arif*!"

They summoned him and when he came in, the Shaikh said: "Oh young man, where did the money come from that you spent on the darvishes' meals?"

He replied: "Oh Shaikh, when my grandmother was called to God, I was left a necklace which had thirty beads of gold strung on it. This came to me as a licit inheritance. Every day I sold one of those beads for a dinar and spent it on the Sufis' meals. Today the beads have come to an end and the Shaikh has decided to depart."

When the *‘arif* said these words, the difficulty they had all experienced disappeared and their belief in our Shaikh Abu Sa‘id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was redoubled.

* * *

KVāja Imam Bu ‘Aṣem-e ‘Eyāzi had two sons. He said to his brother, KVāja Imam Bu Naṣr-e ‘Eyāzi:

"Take them before the *pir*, that is Shaikh Abu Sa‘id-e Bu'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, so that his glance may fall on them and that he may invoke God on their behalf."

Then they set out. When they reached our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and he caught sight of them from a distance, he said:

Book Two, Chapter One

"The message has arrived and I have understood: may God cause them both to grow 'with good increase' ³⁰¹."

* * *

Know that the stories concerning the miraculous gifts of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, are too numerous to be contained in this compilation. Since ours is a policy of brevity and economy, the limit has been set at the present amount, after having exerted ourselves to the utmost in verifying the chains of transmission³⁰² and the honesty of the informants. And towards that end, minute care has been employed.

Whatever had been presented beyond this, would have passed the bounds of economy and proved to be irksome and tedious.

If a person reads these stories with a view to gaining moral insights, then one tenth of a tenth of them will suffice.

God, *He is sublime and exalted*, grant assistance in hearing their true meaning and applying it with sincerity.

And God preserve for us and all the people of Islam the grace-bestowing power of the Shaikh's utterances³⁰³, "moments" and his spiritual states, until the resurrection day -- *for the sake of Moḥammad and Moḥammad's family, one and all.*

BOOK TWO

CHAPTER TWO

Accounts containing an instructive point, along with some accounts about other shaikhs which, for the sake of conferring a benefit, passed the Shaikh's blessed lips.

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in the lavatory. In the midst of cleansing himself¹, he called to Hasan-e Mo'addeb: "Come take off this robe of mine. Sell it to buy sweets for the darvishes."

Hasan came in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions but he said: "Oh Shaikh, wouldn't it be better to wait until you've finished your ablutions and come outside?"

The Shaikh replied: "Satan mustn't find a chance to intervene!"

.....

With this subtle point the Shaikh made it clear to Hasan that when divine inspiration occurs with regard to implementing some matter, one must hasten to do it and not be proud because of one's way of life, for neither the great shaikhs -- despite their illumination -- nor the prophets -- despite their perfected spiritual state -- were safe from Satan's wicked machinations, as accords with:

*"Never have We sent an apostle or a prophet before thee with whose wishes Satan did not tamper. But Allah renders null and void Satan's interjections and confirms His own signs and revelations."*²

* * *

In the time of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, there was a certain darvish who always performed service for the sake of the Shaikh's beauty. Whenever there was a hard job to do, he would undertake it.

One day he was mud-plastering and had mud all over his arms and legs. Just as he was, he left off work and coming before the

Shaikh, he said: "Oh Shaikh, I cannot do all these difficult tasks for God's sake! I yearn for the Shaikh to say 'bravo', 'well done', and to give me support through his praise."

The Shaikh was pleased by the darvish's straightforwardness and smiling, he replied: "From now on I shall do just that!"

Thereafter whenever the Shaikh saw this darvish doing a job, the Shaikh showed approval and praised him. That made the darvish happy and he would pursue the task with increased strength.

* * *

During the time that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Ṭus, one day he was seated with K^Vāja Imam Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Rowqī and they were talking. The Shaikh was preoccupied with a certain concern and while they were talking, the matter was suddenly resolved. The Shaikh exclaimed: "*Praise be to God, the Lord of Creation! God arranges my affairs!*"

K^Vāja Imam Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Rowqī remarked: "Oh Shaikh, and what about my affairs? Is it Bu 'Alī the carpenter who works them out?"³

Our Shaikh replied: "No, of course not. But in the case of your affairs, you are there and actively involved. You say: 'I did such-and-such and I should have done this or that.'

Consequently, God arranges your affairs as well, but you are there and maintain: 'I exist', whereas in the case of my affairs, I am not there at all."

* * *

K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān one day remarked in Nowqān: "My relation to Shaikh Bu Sa'īd is best illustrated by a measure of millet seed. Shaikh Bu Sa'īd is a single grain and I am all the rest."

One of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's devotees was present. When he heard this, he rose to his feet in a huff, put on his shoes, and set off to see our Shaikh. When he told the Shaikh what he'd heard K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān say, the Shaikh remarked: "Tell K^Vāja Imam Moẓaffar: 'You are that single grain as well. For my part, I am nothing at all.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had been staying in Ṭus. When the Shaikh was about to depart, Ostād Abu Bakr came out of the city with the Shaikh to bid him farewell. Though the Shaikh several times told him to return to the city, he would not.

The Shaikh said: "You must go back."

Ostād Abu Bakr replied: "Oh Shaikh, I shall not go back without some souvenir!"

The Shaikh said: "Give up the path of planning your affairs and follow the path of the divine decree."

* * *

One of the Shaikh's small sons was called to the other world and the Shaikh had loved him dearly. When the child was carried to the cemetery, the Shaikh placed him in the grave with his own hands. As he came forth from the grave, tears flowed from the Shaikh's blessed eyes and he recited the following lines of verse:

"We must look upon the ugly and deem it fair.
We must swallow poison and imagine it's sugar.
An unbroken colt, I kicked, not knowing then,
The more one pulls, the more the noose tightens."⁴

And after that another one of our Shaikh's small sons received the fatal call. The Shaikh declared: "The people of Paradise wished to have a memento from me. I have sent them two aromatic delicacies⁵ until my own arrival."

* * *

One day while our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, he said: "Saddle my horse. I wish to ride forth into the countryside."

The horse was saddled and the Shaikh mounted up and a large group set out in our Shaikh's company.

Not far from Nishapur they came to a village. Our Shaikh asked: "What is this village called?"

The reply was: "Door of the Beloved."

Our Shaikh alighted at the village and spent that day there. The next day the group of disciples said: "Oh Shaikh, let us depart."

The Shaikh replied: "A man must travel a long way to reach the Door of the Beloved. Since we have arrived, where else should we go?"

The Shaikh stayed there forty days and great events of the spirit came to pass. Thereupon the greater part of the inhabitants of the village repented at the hand of the Shaikh. All the people of the village became the Shaikh's devotees.

* * *

One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was having himself bled. He said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Oh Ḥasan, what does this look like to you?"

Ḥasan replied:

"Men of this world are bled and blood comes forth.
Your veins are opened and your love flows forth."

The Shaikh said to the bleeder: "Take my arm and bind it up."

The Shaikh's arm was immediately bound and he never had blood removed again.

* * *

One day when our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was discoursing before an assembly in Nishapur, K^Vāja Bu 'Ali(-ye Sinā)⁶ came into the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*. The two men had not previously met one another, although they had carried on a correspondence⁷.

The moment Bu 'Ali walked through the door, our Shaikh turned to him and said: "Someone versed in philosophy has arrived."

K^Vāja Bu 'Ali came in and took a seat and the Shaikh went on with his discourse. Having brought the assembly to a close, the Shaikh came down from his raised platform and retired to his apartment. K^Vāja Bu 'Ali went into the apartment with the Shaikh and they closed the door behind them.

Book Two, Chapter Two

Three days they were with one another in private, talking. No one knows what they said, nor was anyone admitted into their presence unless they gave him permission, and they only emerged for the congregational prayers.

After three days and nights KVāja Bu ‘Ali departed. KVāja Bu ‘Ali’s students asked him: "How did you find the Shaikh?"

He replied: "Everything I know, he sees!"

And when the Sufis and the Shaikh’s disciples came before the Shaikh, they asked him: "Oh Shaikh, how did you find Bu ‘Ali?"

He replied: "Everything I see, he knows!"⁸

.....

KVāja Bu ‘Ali conceived an attachment for our Shaikh and constantly visited our Shaikh and witnessed his miraculous powers.

One day when he entered the Shaikh’s *kānaqāh*, the Shaikh had ordered: "Saddle my horse. We will visit Zandarzan."

.....

Zandarzan is a place situated on one side of Nishapur on the famous mountain where Ebrāhim-e Adham’s⁹ cave and retreat are found. He had performed his devotions there for some time.

.....

When KVāja Bu ‘Ali entered, our Shaikh said: "We intend to make a pilgrimage to Zandarzan."

KVāja Bu ‘Ali replied: "I shall come along as well."

They both set out and a large group of Sufis and disciples of the Shaikh, as well as a number of Bu ‘Ali’s students, went with them.

At a certain point there was a reed lying on the road and the Shaikh ordered them to pick it up.

When they arrived near the retreat, the Shaikh got off his horse and took the reed and held it in his hand. They came to a place where there was a solid rock. Holding the reed in his hand, the Shaikh struck it against the hard stone and the reed, up to where the Shaikh’s blessed hand gripped it, penetrated into the rock.

When KVāja Bu ‘Ali saw this, he fell down before the Shaikh and kissed the Shaikh’s feet. No one was aware of what KVāja Bu ‘Ali had been thinking in his heart that caused the Shaikh to dis-

play this miracle to him. In any case, Kṽāja Bu ‘Ali became such a devotee of our Shaikh that there was scarcely a day when Bu ‘Ali didn't come to visit him.

.....

Thereafter, every book on philosophy Bu ‘Ali wrote -- such as the *Eṣṣārāt*¹⁰ and others as well -- contained a detailed chapter concerned with "this higher meaning" and with confirming the miracles of the Friends and the pre-eminence of the mystic states of the Sufis. Bu ‘Ali even composed works which deal exclusively with explaining the spiritual grades of the Sufis and the nature of traveling the mystic path and the way of Truth. But this is a well-known fact.

* * *

When Kṽāja Ḥasan-e Mo‘addeb, *God have mercy on him*, became a devotee of the Shaikh in Nishapur and came to wait upon him, whatever worldly wealth he possessed, he spent on the Shaikh's behalf. Meanwhile, the Shaikh ordered Ḥasan to serve the darvishes and assigned him this subtle and difficult task.

Ḥasan performed this service and the Shaikh, with gentleness and by degrees, prescribed ascetic disciplines for him and urged him to undergo all that is required by the mystic path.

Nonetheless, something of his proud lordliness¹¹ still remained inside Kṽāja Ḥasan.

One day our Shaikh called Ḥasan and said: "Oh Ḥasan, take a basket and go to the Market of the Kermānis. Buy up all the tripe and organs¹² you find and put them in the basket. Then carry it all back to the *kānaqāh* on your shoulders."

Ḥasan raised the basket to his shoulder and set out. This task was extremely difficult for him. Nonetheless, it was obligatory that he obey the *pir's* instructions, for:

"The shaikh is to his community, what the prophet is to his nation."

Thus, he came to the Market of the Kermānis. There he bought all the tripe and organs he could find and having put them in the basket, lifted the basket onto his shoulder. The blood and filth ran down his back and over his robe.

Book Two, Chapter Two

Every moment Ḥasan died another death out of confusion and shame before the people, for they had recently seen him in splendid clothes and with great worldly wealth and servants and luxury but that day they beheld him in such a state.

Ḥasan had great difficulty to divest himself of his lordliness -- and so it is for all men.

On this point Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

"Love of leadership is the last thing to leave the heads of the righteous."

And, in point of fact, the purpose of the Shaikh's command was to cause Ḥasan's remaining sense of worldly prestige and love of high rank to disappear.

And so, Ḥasan lifted the basket onto his shoulder and in this manner carried it from the Market of the Kermānis to the Shaikh's *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street. And that is one half the length of the bazaar of Nishapur.

When he entered the *kānaqāh* and stood before the Shaikh, the Shaikh said: "Carry this, just as it is, to the city gate of Ḥira. Wash it all nicely in the running water there, and bring it back again."

And that is the length of the other half of the city's bazaar.

In this manner Ḥasan went to the Ḥira Gate and there he washed the organs and brought them back.

When he reached the *kānaqāh*, nothing of his lordliness and high position remained within him. He entered the *kānaqāh* as a free man with happy heart.

The Shaikh said: "Now hand this over to the cook so that he may prepare a tripe stew for our companions tonight."

Ḥasan handed the basket over to the cook and brought whatever else was necessary so that the cook could busy himself with the preparation.

The Shaikh had observed the great pain Ḥasan experienced carrying out this disciplinary task. The Shaikh called Ḥasan and said: "Now perform a major ablution, put on your usual clean clothes, and go to the Market of the Kermānis. From there go to the Ḥira Gate and along the way ask all the people of the bazaar: 'Have you seen anyone carrying a basket full of tripe on his shoulder?'"

In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions Ḥasan set out, and from the point where he'd bought the innards to where he'd

washed them and then brought them back, he interrogated every shop owner and everyone who'd seen him -- one after the other. No one replied that he'd seen any such person or that the person in question was Ḥasan.

When Ḥasan returned to the Shaikh, the Shaikh exclaimed: "Oh Ḥasan, you are the one who sees yourself, otherwise no one else is concerned with seeing you. It is your Self that adorns you in your eye. You must subdue the Self. You must beat it and not stop beating it until it dies. And keep it so engaged with the Real that it has no concern for itself or other creatures."

When Ḥasan came to witness this state of affairs, he was released completely from the bonds of lordliness and love of high position, and became free.

Meanwhile, the cook prepared the tripe stew, and that night the table-cloth was spread out and the stew was served and the Shaikh and his group of Sufis sat down to supper. The Shaikh exclaimed: "Oh companions, eat your fill, for tonight you are eating a stew concocted from Hasan's lordly pride!"

* * *

One day someone approached our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have come for you to tell me something of the secrets of the Real."

The Shaikh replied: "Be off but come back tomorrow."

The man went away and that day the Shaikh ordered a mouse to be caught and placed in a box with a firm lid on it. The following day the man returned and said: "Oh Shaikh, tell me what you promised me yesterday."

The Shaikh ordered the box to be given to the man and said: "Above all, don't open the lid of this box."

The man took the box and departed. When he arrived home, the desire came over him to know what secret the box contained. He tried very hard to restrain himself but he didn't have the patience. He opened the box and the mouse jumped out and ran off.

The man came before the Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, I sought a secret from you concerning God, *He is exalted*, and you gave me a mouse in a box."

The Shaikh replied: "Oh darvish, I gave you a mouse in a box and you were unable to keep it hidden. If I told you a secret concerning the Real, *He is sublime and exalted*, would you be able to keep it to yourself?"

* * *

Whenever a devotee of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, decided to get married, the Shaikh would call the wife before him and say: "There are three tasks you must perform:

Whatever the master of the house brings home in the way of grain, provisions and suchlike, you are not to take for your own use and spend as women do, for spinning and weaving linen, without their husband's permission. Do not behave that way, for then all blessedness will leave those goods.

And do not allow the spider's house in your house. That is where Satan finds refuge, and my devotees do not cohabit with Satan.

And whatever food you prepare and whatever you place in the cooking pot -- whether meat or grain or anything else -- first wash and only then place it in the pot.

Remember each of these three points I have told you and it will turn out well for you."

* * *

It has been related that one day the Shaikh wished to perform his ritual ablutions and sent a darvish to fetch some water. The darvish was late returning. Everyone who was present from among the disciples raised objections and expressed criticism and disapproval, saying: "It's not far to the water. Why is it taking him so long?"

When the darvish returned, the Shaikh being aware of the reproach in their hearts, said: "The water I required for this ablution had not yet flowed forth from the spring. This darvish was waiting for the water to come forth. When it arrived, he brought it. For your part, don't be finding fault!"

* * *

Kvāja Imam Abu Bakr-e Šābuni was a fellow student of our Shaikh in Marv. When the Shaikh's spiritual state reached its high degree, one day Kvāja Imam Abu Bakr came before the Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, we were both students together in the same school. But God, *He is sublime and exalted*, has raised you to this

lofty station, while I have remained as I am, a doctor of religious law. What is the cause of this?"

The Shaikh replied: "Do you remember that a certain day our teacher dictated the following Tradition to us:

'Abandoning what he can do without, is proof of a man's true faith in Islam.'

We both wrote it down. But what did you do when you went home?"

Abu Bakr answered: "I learned it by heart and went on to learn other things."

The Shaikh said: "I did not act like that. Whatever was not necessary to me, I removed from my sight and put the thought of it out of my heart. What was indispensable to me, I embraced and gave over my heart to meditating upon it. And that Tradition is from God, *mighty is His power and His glory*, for He has declared:

*'Say Allah, and then leave them...'*¹³

I am what you cannot do without. Be attendant on what you cannot do without!

*There is no God but He. Therefore take Him for Protector.*¹⁴

• • •

In Saraks they asked our Shaikh: "Who is elegant?"

The Shaikh replied: "In your city, Loqmān¹⁵."

But they responded: "*God is sublime!*"¹⁶ There is no one in our city more unkempt and dirty."

The Shaikh said: "You are mistaken. To be elegant is to be pure and what is truly pure, has no attachment to anything. Now, no one is more unconnected and unattached and more pure than Loqmān. He has no ties whatsoever with anything -- not with this world or the hereafter, and not with the Self."

* * *

The Shaikh was informed: "So-and-so walks on the surface of water."

The Shaikh replied: "That's easy enough, the frog and the finch also walk on water."

They said: "So-and-so flies in the air."

The Shaikh replied: "The gnat and the kite fly in the air as well."

Then they said: "A certain person transports himself from one city to another in one instant."

The Shaikh retorted: "Satan, too, goes from the East to the West in the space of one breath. There is no great value in such things as these."

The real man is he who sits and rises among God's creatures, sleeps and eats in their midst, and in the bazaar has dealings with the people and mixes with them -- and yet, in his heart, is not forgetful of God for a single instant."

* * *

One day in Meyhana the muezzin gave the call for noonday prayers and recited the *qāmat*¹⁷. However, it grew late and the Shaikh did not come forth from his house. In accordance with his daily practice, the muezzin went before the door of the Shaikh's house several times and recited the *qāmat*, until at length, when it was almost too late¹⁸, the Shaikh came forth.

Thereupon the muezzin repeated the *qāmat* and they performed the prayers. When the Shaikh had sat down, the shaikhs and companions asked: "Oh Shaikh, with due respect, you were late coming forth today."

The Shaikh replied: "Worldliness had hold of my skirts and was saying: 'All things have received some portion from you. I want a portion from you as well.'"

As much as I struggled and entreated him, he would not give up his hold on my skirts. When it was almost too late for the prayers, I gave Mofazzal over to him. Only then did he release me."

.....

Thereafter Worldliness gave assistance to Kvāja Mofazzal and his offspring. Of the descendants of the Shaikh no one acquired more from Worldliness than was barely sufficient for his needs, and that with a thousand stratagems -- except the offspring of Kvāja Mofazzal. They all came to possess property and wealth.

* * *

One time when the Shaikh came to Ṭus, the people entreated him to speak before an assembly. The Shaikh consented. At dawn a platform was set up in the Kānaqāh of the Master and people began arriving and seating themselves. When the Shaikh came forth, the chanters recited from the Qorʾān.

Meanwhile, so many people had come in that there was no more room left.

The master of ceremonies rose to his feet and said: "May God have mercy on each person who takes one step forward from where he is."

The Shaikh exclaimed:

"God bless Moḥammad and his family, one and all!"

And the Shaikh drew his hand down over his face¹⁹ and said: "Everything I wished to say and everthing the prophets declared, he has just said: 'May you advance one step from what you are.'"

And the Shaikh didn't say another word but came down from the platform and with that he brought the assembly to a close.

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Saʿid, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "A hundred spiritual masters have spoken concerning Sufism. The first said the same as the last. The modes of expression were different but the meaning was one: *'Sufism is dropping all affectation.'*

And there is no affectation of yours that comes before your own You-ness. The moment you become involved with your Self, you are cut off from Him."

.....

Book Two, Chapter Two

Our Shaikh has said: "Shaikhs and men of distinction have declared: 'Whatever is fit for created beings²⁰, is not fit for God and whatever is fit for God, is not fit for created beings.'"

.....

One time our Shaikh was reciting from the Qor'ān. During the last years of his life he would recite all the verses to do with mercy and leave out the verses concerning punishment.

On this occasion someone remarked: "Oh Shaikh, this way the order of the Qor'ān is ruined."

The Shaikh replied:

"Cupbearers, pour the wine, musicians play.
Today I drink, this is the hour of feasting.
Wine and dirhems are at hand, her rosy face.
Sorrow is no more than my enemy's regret."

Then the Shaikh said: "My lot is all glad tidings and divine forgiveness. What do I want with fault finding?"

Just then a thought passed through a darvish's heart. The Shaikh said:

*"And that, in spite of Abu'l-Dardā"*²¹

The Shaikh often made that same remark.

* * *

The Shaikh has said: "Abu Bakr-e Vāseṭi²² declared:

'People's attachment to one another is like the attachment between one prisoner and another.'"

.....

Our Shaikh has related: "Someone asked a spiritual master to tell him something.

The master replied: 'All that lies between the highest heaven and the earth does not amount to one atom compared with His power, and all existing knowledge cannot attain to one atom of the Lord's being.

To speak about "something" which is no "thing" at all, is impossible, since it is beyond expression."

.....

Our Shaikh has related: "Another spiritual master was asked to say a few words.

He replied:

'Anything other than God is devoid of true being. So what should I speak about?'"

.....

Our Shaikh has said: "Sahl b. 'Abdollāh²³ has declared:

'It is a disgrace for a man who has donned the mystic robe, to bear in his heart concern for his daily bread. For God sees to the daily sustenance of His devotees. His grace alone provides for their needs.'"

.....

Our Shaikh has related:

"I was in Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb's²⁴ presence in Ṭabarestān when Sufis came before him, each one concerned with a particular thing and a particular place and desire. When night came on, Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās exclaimed: 'Oh Lord God, everyone has some wish, whereas I want to have no wish. And everyone has an "I", whereas I want to have no "I".

What I want is not to be me!'"

* * *

One day in Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly. In the middle of his discourse when he had warmed up and had entered an ecstatic state, he exclaimed:

"In the robe²⁵ there is only God!"

And the Shaikh slipped his index finger under the robe he had on. There where his blessed chest was located his blessed finger broke through the robe.

Many shaikhs, religious leaders and men of distinction were present, such as Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, Ostād Abu'l-

Book Two, Chapter Two

Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, and Ostād Esmā'il-e Ṣābuni²⁶, *God sanctify their spirits* -- as well as other shaikhs and religious leaders, mention of whom would prove tedious -- and no one raised objections or felt disapproval in his heart. Indeed, all those present experienced such a state that they were transported with ecstasy.

Thereupon, following the Shaikh's example, all the shaikhs threw their robes into the middle of the gathering.

When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close and came down from the raised platform, his robe -- along with the mystic robes of the other shaikhs -- was cut into pieces. However, all the shaikhs agreed that the one piece from the front part of our Shaikh's robe which bore the mark of the Shaikh's blessed finger, would not be cut up. It was to be kept so that at any time travelers could pay their respects to it.

Thus, that cubit's length of cloth, just as it was with its cotton wadding and lining, was set aside and came to be in the possession of K^vāja Bu'l-Faḥ-e Šeyk²⁷ and his offspring.

People coming from all corners of the world to make a pilgrimage to our Shaikh in Meyhana, once they had paid their respects to his sanctified tomb, would visit this piece of cloth, as well as other precious relics of the Shaikh, and they would see the mark left in it by his finger.

And so the situation remained until the disruptions of the Ġozz²⁸. During that period it was destroyed along with the other precious relics of the Shaikh.

* * *

There was a darvish in Nishapur whose name was Ḥamza, the Dust -- because of the humility he possessed. One day he wrote a letter to our Shaikh and out of humility signed it:

"The dust beneath your feet."

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, wrote the following verses on the reverse side of the letter and sent it back as an answer:

"When you turned to dust,
I became the dust of your dust.
Being dust of your dust, I was cleansed."

.....

Šeyk al-Eslām K^vāja Bu Sa‘d, the grandfather of this well-wishing author, has related:

"There are those who think that the verses that passed our Shaikh's blessed lips during his discourses, were verses he composed himself. But such was not the case. The Shaikh was so immersed in his higher state of beholding the Real that, throughout his life, he had no interest in pondering verses or anything else.

The only verses he composed were those he wrote on the back of Ḥamza's letter, as well as the following quatrain:

My love, there is no thorn in Kābarān²⁹
That has not lashed my flesh and destiny.
But I would meet with no blame if I gave my life
To your beauty and grace one hundred thousand times.

Everything else that passed the Shaikh's blessed lips was what he learned from his spiritual guides."

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"I heard the following from Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin³⁰ in Meyhana."

.....

And he was a great spiritual guide. From the beginning he was our Shaikh's *pir*.

.....

The Shaikh said: "One day he told me: 'Oh Bu Sa'id:

While the liver roasts in flame, the hero smiles.
Needless to say, the world knows but few heroes."

.....

And one day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was discoursing and many *pirs* and Sufis were seated before him. Someone in their midst began to weep with so great a noise that the weeping caused anxiety in the heart of those present.

Book Two, Chapter Two

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, looked at the man with a gaze of awesome authority³¹ and said:

"If you wish to profess what I profess, sit the way I sit. Indeed, he who remains firm, shall flourish, and he who persists, shall triumph."

And then the Shaikh said: *"I heard 'Oqba b. 'Āmer³² report:*

'The Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, has declared: "When iniquity perfects itself in God's servant, he controls both his eyes and weeps at will."'

To this the Shaikh added:

*"Though the China Sea kept you apart from me,
I'd consider it a mirage of no effect.
Call me, and though Hell-fire lie between,
My love will make it easy to pass through the flames."*

.....

And then our Shaikh related:

"One day a man came before Shaikh Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan³³ and said: 'Oh Shaikh, last night I saw you in a dream. You were dead and laid out on a funeral bier.'

Pir Bu'l-Faḥl replied:

'Hush! That was yourself you beheld in the dream. True Sufis³⁴ never die.

Verily, he who lives in God shall never die."

* * *

It has been related that one day when a darvish was performing his ablutions, the Shaikh entered the lavatory. The darvish, while washing his hands, was repeating:

*"Oh Lord God, give me my book in my right hand."*³⁵

Our Shaikh remarked: "Oh darvish, and then what? What would you recite from that book? This is no way to speak. You don't have the capacity for that."

The darvish asked: "Oh Shaikh, then what should I say?"

The Shaikh replied: "Say:

'Oh Lord God, forgive me and have mercy on me, and do not call me to account.'"

* * *

Bābā Ḥasan, *God have mercy on him*, was the prayer leader of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and during the Shaikh's lifetime held the office of prayer leader of the Sufis.

One day Bābā Ḥasan was directing the morning prayers. When he came to pronounce the *qonut*³⁶, he said:

"Our divine Master is blessed and exalted! Oh Lord God, bestow blessings on Moḥammad."

Then he prostrated himself.

When the prayers were over, the Shaikh asked: "Why did you not invoke blessings upon Moḥammad and upon Moḥammad's family? That is, why didn't you say:

'Oh Lord God, bestow blessings upon Moḥammad and upon Moḥammad's family.'"

Bābā Ḥasan replied: "Oh Shaikh, our companions³⁷ are in disagreement as to whether blessings should be invoked on behalf of Moḥammad's family after the first *taṣāhhod*³⁸ and the *qonut*. In view of this disagreement, by way of caution I did not pronounce the invocation."

The Shaikh said: "For my part, I shall not march in a procession which does not include the family of Moḥammad."

* * *

During the period our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, hostility toward him arose from many sides. And the case of Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri³⁹ and the

Book Two, Chapter Two

other men of distinction has been described earlier on. However, when Ostād Imam finally attended the Shaikh's assembly, Ostād's hostility disappeared. Thereafter, only from time to time did Ostād Imam, out of human imperfection, experience some small disagreement in his inner heart.

One day Ostād Imam and a group of followers were accompanying the Shaikh down a street. A dog that was a stranger to the neighborhood, came into the street. All at once the local dogs started barking and fell upon the stranger. In the end, the foreign dog was wounded and driven out of the neighborhood.

The Shaikh drew in his reins and exclaimed: "Bu Sa'id is a stranger in this city. See that you do not play the dog with him!"

Disapproval and enmity left Ostād Imam's heart completely and he realized that disapproval, quarrelsomeness and party zeal all come from the carnal soul. Thereafter, between Ostād Imam and the Shaikh, there existed a state of serenity which was never tainted with impurity.

* * *

KVāja 'Abd al-Karim who was from Nishapur, was the personal servant of our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He has related:

"I was a child when my father brought me to wait upon Shaikh Bu Sa'id. When my father had departed, I stood before the Shaikh awaiting his orders. The eye of the Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, fell upon a bit of refuse lying under the *kānaqāh's* portico. He pointed to it. I went and picked it up.

The Shaikh said: 'Bring it to me.'

I placed it before the Shaikh. Then the Shaikh said: 'What is this called in your language?'

I replied: 'Refuse⁴⁰.'

The Shaikh said: 'Know that this world and the world to come are as a bit of refuse lying on the mystic path. Until you remove it from the path, you shall not reach the final goal.'

The Chief of the world⁴¹, *blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

"The least (of the stages of true faith) is to remove the dirt from the path."

Then the Shaikh added: 'Whatever is not of God, is nothing and whoever is not of God, is not a person! There where "you" are is sheer Hell. Where "you" are not, is sheer Paradise.'

* * *

One of the Shaikh's devotees was coming from Iraq to visit the Shaikh in Meyhana and he was bringing many beautiful clothes with him to give to the Shaikh. All along the way he deluded himself with the thought that: "I am bringing the Shaikh such elegant and fine garments. He will be greatly pleased with these gifts and feel indebted to me. And for this reason he will accord me much honor."

When the devotee was one *farsak*⁴² from Meyhana, our Shaikh said: "Saddle my horse!"

The horse was saddled and the Shaikh mounted up and the whole group set out with him. The Shaikh went forth into the countryside.

When he reached the darvish, the darvish's illusion increased. He thought that the Shaikh had come forth from the city to honor him because of the clothes. In the midst of such imaginings love of the world grew in his heart.

He came before the Shaikh and fell at his feet. The Shaikh said: "Give me the clothes you have brought for me."

The darvish took the clothes out of his baggage and brought them before the Shaikh. Unfolding them one by one, he presented them to the Shaikh. The Shaikh ordered all the clothes to be torn to shreds right there and had each shred hung on a different thorn bush. And then they departed.

The darvish was put to shame and totally confounded.

Through this gesture the Shaikh made clear to him: "This is what value the world has in my eyes. Your fanciful pride with regard to these clothes was entirely worship of this world, whereas the mystic community pays no heed to this world, nor is it concerned with the world to come."

Thus, concern for the world grew cold in the darvish's heart. When he reached Meyhana, he remained in the Shaikh's service and came to receive instruction. In the end, he became one of the esteemed members of the mystic community.

* * *

One day a darvish arrived in Meyhana and, just as he was, still wearing his sandals of the road, went before our Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have traveled a long way and wearied my feet but I have not found peace myself, nor beheld anyone else at peace."

The Shaikh replied: "That is no wonder. 'You' undertook the journey and sought 'your own' desire. If you had not been present in your journey and you had renounced your Self for one instant, then you would have found peace and others, too, would have found peace through you."

Man's prison is man's individual existence. Once he takes a step forth from prison, he reaches his desire."

* * *

In Tus there was an 'Alavi⁴³ named Sayyed Hamza whose house stood by the Rudbār Gate. Our Shaikh loved him dearly and this man was a fervent devotee of our Shaikh. He was a wealthy man. And whenever our Shaikh came to Tus, Sayyed Hamza would be informed. He would bring our Shaikh to stay in his house and the Shaikh, holding him in affection, would consent to stay there.

On one occasion our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Tus and asked for Sayyed Hamza, but was told: "Oh Shaikh, it is not possible to see the sayyed. He has been engaged in sin and debauchery for forty days and nights. He drinks draught upon draught, starting in the early morning. He has given wine to his servants and slave girls, encouraging them to carouse together naked and drunk."

Our Shaikh exclaimed: "How wonderful! No less a sin befits a threshold as lofty as his."

And the Shaikh said nothing further, nor did he raise any objection.

When Sayyed Hamza was informed that Shaikh Bu Sa'id had arrived, he immediately left off his sinful behavior and the following day he came to see the Shaikh.

The Shaikh accorded Sayyed Hamza the same respect as on all other occasions and made no mention of the report he'd heard. The Shaikh showed no disapproval and his affection for the sayyed was in no way diminished.

* * *

During the period that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, stayed in Nishapur, Shaikh Bu ‘Abdollāh-e Bāku⁴⁴ resided in Shaikh Bu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami's⁴⁵ *kānaqāh*. And he was the *pir* of the *kānaqāh* after Shaikh Bu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān.

.....

This Bāku is a village in the district of Šervān.⁴⁶

.....

Bu ‘Abdollāh-e Bāku would often raise objections and question our Shaikh about the mystic path and the Shaikh would answer him.

One day he came to the Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, there are several things I see you do that my spiritual masters never did."

Our Shaikh replied: "May the *k^vāja* say what they are."

Bu ‘Abdollāh said: "One is that you seat the young men with the elders and in spiritual matters you treat the little as equal to the big⁴⁷. And when distributing donations, you make no distinction between the big and the little.

Another thing is, you give permission to the young men to perform the *samā*⁴⁸ and dance.

Thirdly, when a darvish throws off his robe, you sometimes order that it be given back to him, saying: 'The darvish has the greater right to his mystic robe.'

My spiritual masters didn't do this."

Our Shaikh asked: "Is there anything else?"

He said no.

The Shaikh said: "With regard to the matter of the little and the big, in my sight none of the devotees is little. Whoever sets his foot on the mystic path -- even though he is young -- the consideration given him by the *pirs* must make it possible for him to receive in one day whatever I have had bestowed on me in seventy years. Since that is the belief, no one appears little.

As for the young men's dancing during the *samā*, their animal soul is not empty of sensual passion. Indeed, it is possible that one of their passions becomes dominant and that their passion overwhelms all their limbs.

If they clap one hand against the other, the passion in their hands is dispersed. If they lift up their feet, the passion in their feet

grows less. And when, in this manner, passion is reduced in their limbs, they are able to keep themselves back from major sins, whereas if all the passions were united -- *I take refuge in God (from such an eventuality)* -- the young men would fall into a major sin.

Therefore, it is better that the fire of sensual passion be dispersed in the *samā'* rather than in anything else.

As for the robe -- the robe a darvish throws away is under the jurisdiction of the group but the hearts of the group are worried about his robe. They dress him in this robe for the group's sake and remove the burden of this darvish's robe from their hearts. But because they cannot find another robe immediately does not mean the darvish has had his robe returned to him. Rather the darvishes have given him their own robe and thereby have set their hearts at peace concerning him.

Thus he is under the protection of the group's spiritual concern. This robe is no longer the same robe."

Shaikh Bu 'Abdollah declared: "Had I not met the Shaikh, I would never have set eyes upon a Sufi!"

* * *

One day during the same period Shaikh Bu 'Abdollah-e Bāku had attended an assembly of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and was sitting with a lack of proper composure. He bore himself like a lord and sat cross-legged⁴⁹. Our Shaikh's glance fell upon him. Then during his discourse the Shaikh acted graciously and addressed a compliment to someone.

That person replied to the Shaikh: "May God grant you Paradise!"

The Shaikh retorted: "Oh no, not for me! I have no wish for Paradise! ...with its gang of handicapped and poor. There's no one there but the lame, the blind and the helpless.

What I want is Hell where Jamšid, Nimrod, Pharaoh and Hāmān⁵⁰ reside, where this lord is... "

And he pointed at Bu 'Abdollah-e Bāku.

"And where I will be... "

And he pointed at himself.

Shaikh Bu 'Abdollah was put to shame and came back to his senses. He realized he had committed a serious breach of good manners and to himself he repented.

When the Shaikh came down from the pulpit, Bu ‘Abdollāh went before the Shaikh and confirmed what he'd said. He sought forgiveness and thereafter never sat in such a manner again.

* * *

Pir Ḥobbi was our Shaikh's personal tailor. One day he had sewn a robe of the Shaikh's -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* It was the hour of the afternoon nap and the Shaikh was lying down. KṼāja ‘Abd al-Karim, the Shaikh's close servant, was at the Shaikh's pillow with a fan in his hand and was cooling the Shaikh.

Pir Ḥobbi, bearing the Shaikh's robe, entered the room. KṼāja ‘Abd al-Karim exclaimed: "What time is this to come here?"

Pir Ḥobbi replied: "Anywhere you can go, I can go as well."

KṼāja ‘Abd al-Karim put down the fan and dealt the tailor several blows. When he had hit him seven times, the Shaikh said: "Enough!"

Pir Ḥobbi went out and complained to KṼāja-ye Najjār.

When the Shaikh came forth for the afternoon prayers, KṼāja-ye Najjār said to him: "The young are raising their hand against their elders. What does the Shaikh say?"

Our Shaikh replied: "KṼāja ‘Abd al-Karim's hand is my hand."

Thereafter no one had anything more to say.

* * *

During the period our Shaikh Abu Sa‘id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, one day he was speaking before an assembly and Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri⁵¹, *God have mercy on him*, was present. A few days earlier a dispute had taken place between Ostād Imam and a landowner over a mill in the village of Ḥoseynābād.

This landowner claimed to own the mill but Ostād Imam said: "It belongs to me!"

During the Shaikh's assembly the reciter chanted:

"Whose is the dominion⁵² on that day?"⁵³

Our Shaikh exclaimed: "For my part, there is no quarrel between me and You. It's with Ostād Imam You have to settle matters. He says: 'The mill in Ḥoseynābād belongs to me.'"

* * *

It has been related that one day in Nishapur our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went into a particular neighborhood together with a large group of Sufis. More than one hundred and fifty persons were accompanying him. Suddenly a woman threw a quantity of ashes from the roof, not knowing someone was passing by. Some of the ashes landed on the Shaikh's robe. But the Shaikh remained calm and was not upset by this.

The Shaikh's followers, however, became greatly agitated and said: "Let's break into this house!"

And they were about to do something.

Our Shaikh exclaimed: "Calm yourselves! For someone who deserves fire but is let off with ashes, there is cause for much gratitude."

A state of joy came over all those in the group. They wept profusely and let out shouts.

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, entered his house and saw Lady Fāṭema who was the daughter of KṼāja Bu Ṭāher and the Shaikh's granddaughter. She had been winding thread onto a skein but had lost the tip of the thread and couldn't find it.

Our Shaikh exclaimed: "Oh Fāṭema, whenever you lose the thread's tip and want to find it, recite this verse from the Qor'ān:

'Do not be like her who unravels the thread to bits, after she had made it strong.'"⁵⁴

Lady Fāṭema recited the verse and she immediately found the tip of the thread.

* * *

It has been recounted that one day in Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had mounted his horse and was going somewhere with his group of followers. He came before the door of a church. As it happened, it was Sunday and all the Christians had gathered inside the church.

Some of those in the group said: "Oh Shaikh, the Christians wish to see you."

The Shaikh dismounted. When the Shaikh and those accompanying him went inside, all the Christians came before the Shaikh and made obeisance. When the Shaikh and his group sat down, the Christians respectfully stood in attendance upon the Shaikh. They wept profusely and bore themselves with humility and ecstatic states were experienced.

There were reciters with the Shaikh. One of them asked: "Oh Shaikh, do they have permission to recite a Qor'ānic verse?"

The Shaikh replied: "That would be good."

Then the reciters chanted a Qor'ānic verse.

Everyone present lost his self-control, let out shouts and wept profusely, and the whole group experienced ecstatic states. When they had recovered themselves, the Shaikh rose to his feet and went outside.

Someone said to the Shaikh: "If the Shaikh had given them a sign, they would all have untied the belts of their religion⁵⁵."

Our Shaikh replied: "It was not I who tied on their belts, nor is it right that I undo them."

* * *

One day in Nishapur our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in the Kānaqāh-e 'Adani Kuyān. In the midst of his discourse he exclaimed: "Everywhere from the kānaqāh door to the back of the kānaqāh jewels have been strewn. Why don't you gather them up?"

All the people looked around them. They imagined there were jewels that they could pick up. When they didn't see any, they said: "Oh Shaikh, where are they? We don't see any jewels!"

The Shaikh replied: "Serve! You must serve!"

* * *

During the period when KVāja Bu Ṭāher, the eldest son of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was a child and was attending school, one day the schoolchildren, as was their custom⁵⁶, carried his writing tablet for him to the Shaikh's house.

Book Two, Chapter Two

KVāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb came before the Shaikh and said: "The children have brought back KVāja Bu Ṭāher's writing tablet, as is the children's custom."

The Shaikh asked: "With which surah of the Qor'ān?"

Ḥasan replied: "With the surah beginning *lam yakon...* 57"

The Shaikh said to Ḥasan: "Give the children some fruit."

Ḥasan brought fruit and gave it to the children.

The Shaikh then asked: "Which of you is the eldest boy at the school?"

They pointed to one of the children. The Shaikh called him and said: "Tell your teacher: 'After this do not send back the children's writing tablet with the surah *lam yakon...* ! When you send back the tablet, send it with the surah *alam naṣrah...*' 58"

* * *

There was an old lady who had a room next door to our Shaikh's *kānaqāh* in Nishapur. She was always pounding an empty mortar with no other purpose than to disturb the darvishes' peace of mind. The darvishes complained to the Shaikh but the Shaikh said nothing about it.

One day the old woman went out and the darvishes said: "Oh Shaikh, let's go and break open the roof of her room. That will keep her busy and she will stop annoying us."

The Shaikh made no comment.

The darvishes went and broke open the old woman's roof.

When the old lady returned and looked up, she saw that her roof was opened and exclaimed: "Alas! From so great a man, so small a rebuke!" 59

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in the bathhouse in Nishapur. Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni⁶⁰, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to the *kānaqāh* to visit the Shaikh and was told: "The Shaikh is in the bathhouse."

Then he, as well, went to the bath to join the Shaikh.

When he came in and sat down with the Shaikh, the Shaikh said: "Is it pleasant here in the bath?"

Bu Moḥammad replied: "Indeed it is."

And then the Shaikh asked: "Why is this bath pleasant?"

"Because the Shaikh is here."

The Shaikh said: "You must give a better answer than that."

Bu Moḥammad replied: "Let the Shaikh answer."

Our Shaikh said: "Because you possess no more than one loin-cloth and a pail, and even these do not belong to you."

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, our Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"One time a group arrived from Iraq and brought our Shaikh a very handsome *farajī*⁶¹ cloak -- the Sufi type with tassels. When they presented it to the Shaikh, he said: 'Dress me in it!'

They put it on the Shaikh.

There was a certain cat that was always moving about the Shaikh and was always in the Shaikh's presence. This cat went and circled round the Shaikh and then pissed on the patched cloak.

Our Shaikh exclaimed: 'I was about to present myself in the dress of the Sufis and be a Sufi for a moment. But this cat has pissed on my Sufism.

Take this *farajī* and give it to Bu'l-Faṭḥ. He is a Sufi!'"

The cloak was removed from the Shaikh and handed over to KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ. And KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ would relate this story with pride.

* * *

I have heard the following in Nishapur from several spiritual guides of virtuous disposition. During the period our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, all the adherents of the different sects and the leaders of the schools of jurisprudence became devotees of the Shaikh. Their former disapproval was transformed into acceptance and they came to believe in his mystic state.

Qāzi Abu Bakr-e Hira was an imam of great distinction, being one of the four Abu Bakrs⁶² in Nishapur concerning whom the shaikhs have declared: "In the earth of Nishapur four Abu Bakrs have been laid to rest and whoever implores God, *He is sublime and exalted*, in their name, God shall grant his every request."

Book Two, Chapter Two

This Qāzi Abu Bakr gave a banquet and invited all the leaders of the religious sects, as well as our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When they were all assembled together, they began to discuss, as is the custom of religious leaders and the learned.

Eventually, their talk turned to the question of which school of jurisprudence was superior. Then every imam, each one being a luminary among the leaders of the schools of jurisprudence, said something by way of confirming his own school. And each group held fast to a particular proof and evidence for the truth of its own religious school and the invalidity of the other schools.

Thus, the discussion drew on and no decision was reached. Nowhere did a point occur at which to break off.

Finally, the great imams agreed to take as arbitrator, the one generous Book, the glorious Qorʾān, in accordance with the passage:

*"There is naught of wet or dry but it is noted in a Book Manifest."*⁶³

They would open at random a complete Qorʾān -- one time with reference to each doctrinal school. Indeed, whatever emerged from the precious Book could only have the status of divine revelation and no one could possibly find fault or interfere with it.

A complete Qorʾān was brought forth and all the leaders of the religious sects having agreed to this procedure, then said to Abu Bakr: "You open the book."

But Abu Bakr replied: "This is my own volume. There is the possibility that someone will say I have marked the pages."

Then every other person was considered until all agreed that the Qorʾān should be given to Shaikh Bu Saʿid, for: "He is possessed of higher states and when the miracle of the Qorʾān is combined with his miraculous gifts, whatever emerges from the glorious Book -- and that can be nothing but the truth --, will be a verse of fixed meaning and not an ambiguous one, which requires allegorical analysis for its interpretation or allows disagreement as to its meaning."

Thus, a complete text of the Qorʾān was placed in the hand of our Shaikh Abu Saʿid -- *God sanctify his awesome soul, as well as the souls of the others present!* Our Shaikh received the text and declared:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, does the Šāfe'i school of religious law stand on a solid foundation and is it the truth?"

And opening the Qor'ān, he indicated the seventh line on the right hand page and showed it to the company.

The first words of the seventh line were:

*"When they ask you, 'Is it true?', say, 'By my Lord God, verily, it is true...' "*⁶⁴

When they read this verse, they were all astonished at the miracle of the Qor'ān and said: "The matter is now concluded. This way we have saved time."

They did not consult the Qor'ān further concerning the other schools of jurisprudence.

.....

This story contains several instructive points. One is, you should know that the Šāfe'i school of law is the truth, on the authority of the text of the glorious Qor'ān. Not that that means you should believe the other schools of religious law are false. Far be it from the reader's thoughts!

And another point is, you should know that when dealing with an important religious question, or when you wish to know which of two courses of action is correct and to be followed, and which is false and to be avoided, it is permissible in such a case to consult the Qor'ān by opening it at random.

Indeed, all the imams of the schools of jurisprudence and the religious dignitaries were present at this gathering, including the Sufi leaders, and they agreed with this form of judgement -- men such as K^vāja Imam Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni and his son, Emām al-Ḥarameyn, and Qāzi Šā'ed⁶⁵, 'Ali-ye Šandali⁶⁶, Abu Bakr-e Eshāq, Ostād Esmā'il-e Šābuni, Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri⁶⁷, and other luminaries from among the leaders and dignitaries of religion.

To mention all their names would prove tedious, though in the realm of religious practice each of them was an exemplary leader of a whole world of followers. In any case, none of them raised an objection concerning what took place, nor said it was improper.

Book Two, Chapter Two

Another point is that one should begin every undertaking from the right-hand side, especially when dealing with important religious matters, which accords with the account of the bearer of Divine Law -- *God's blessings and peace be upon him!*

Finally, the story shows that choosing an odd number is preferable, in accordance with the Tradition:

"Verily, God is One and He shows preference for the odd numbers."

Each and every one of these stories that have been written down and will be written down, contains many such instructive points, but to undertake a lengthy commentary on each one would prove time consuming and tedious.

"A hint suffices for the noble."

* * *

The following has been related concerning the time our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was returning from Nishapur to Meyhana. When the Shaikh had left Ṭus, he came to Darzāv-e Now Bahār⁶⁸. Our Shaikh was riding alone and the company of darvishes was behind him. Those were the early days of the Torkomān raids⁶⁹, when Khorasan was unsafe.

Four or five Torkomāns came up to the Shaikh and intended to take possession of the Shaikh's horse.

The Shaikh exclaimed: "What is this? What is it you want?"

The Torkomāns replied: "Dismount!"

The Shaikh said: "It took four men to lift me into the saddle. Wait a moment until they help me down. The horse is yours."

While they were talking like this, the company of darvishes arrived.

The Shaikh declared: "Help me dismount."

They helped the Shaikh down. However, when the Torkomāns saw the company of followers, they went off. By the time the group had helped the Shaikh dismount, the Torkomāns were far away.

The Shaikh said: "Give them this horse."

The group replied: "We are many men. We will not surrender anything to them."

The Shaikh said: "It must be given to them, for I have said: 'The horse is yours.' Now give it to them!"

They did as the Shaikh instructed. The Torkomāns received the horse and departed, taking the horse with them.

Meanwhile, our Shaikh and his company alighted at the village of Karv-e Jabali.

Toward the hour of afternoon prayers a band of Torkomāns came and returned the Shaikh's horse, along with another fine looking horse as well. They made excuses at great length and said: "Oh Shaikh, these young men didn't understand. Be reconciled with us and with them. You displayed your greatness but they didn't perceive it."

The Shaikh did not accept the horses. The Torkomāns spoke for some time and pleaded and wept in order to make the Shaikh accept their horse. The Shaikh did not accept it and would not even take back his own horse. But he treated them very kindly.

The Shaikh said: "I have given them this horse and whatever I once renounce, I have nothing to do with."

When the Shaikh said this, all the Torkomāns repented of their former life and cut their hair⁷⁰. That year they all went on the pilgrimage to Mecca and they became men of virtue -- thanks to the Shaikh's blessing.

* * *

During the period our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, there was an old lady who had a room located above the Shaikh's kānaqāh, so that she saw the Shaikh all through the day. However, the old lady regularly attended the assemblies of Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri⁷¹. She never came to the Shaikh's assembly and didn't hear his discourses.

People said to her: "Oh aged lady, you see the Shaikh all day and you have witnessed so many of his manifest miracles. Yet you are never present at his assembly and do not seek blessings from his sacred words but attend the assemblies of Ostād Imam. Do you behold something there that you do not behold here?⁷² What is this situation?"

The old lady wept in pain. She said: "What can I do? It's not up to me. Ostād Imam has been revealed to me⁷³, whereas Shaikh Bu Sa'id has not."

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Nishapur. That day he held a handkerchief in his hand.

In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh said: "In exchange for this handkerchief I must have three hundred Nishapuri dinars, for Ḥasan has incurred debts amounting to three hundred dinars."

An old lady cried out: "I will give you the money."

Those present remarked: "Oh aged lady, this is a matter of three hundred Nishapuri dinars. Where would you get the money?"

She replied: "Yes, I know. When the Shaikh spoke, I calculated what I had brought by way of a dowry from my father's house to the house of my husband, and what my husband gave me. The total comes to three hundred dinars. I put it at the Shaikh's disposal."

The Shaikh exclaimed: "May it prove a blessing!"

The Shaikh gave Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb the handkerchief to pass on to the old lady. Ḥasan took the handkerchief and brought it to her.

Then the Shaikh said: "Oh Ḥasan, ask this old lady what prayer I may make on her behalf."

Ḥasan asked the old lady: "What invocation may the Shaikh make on your behalf?"

She replied: "Let him invoke gladness of heart for me."

Ḥasan told the Shaikh. The Shaikh smiled and said: "Oh simple of heart, why didn't you ask for high position, for property and estates? How did gladness of heart ever occur to you?"

For seventy years I have been lying in wait, hoping to catch 'this matter'⁷⁴, and still no whiff of 'this matter' has reached my nostrils."

* * *

One day in Nishapur when our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was sitting in his *kānaqāh*, the Sayyed-e Ajall⁷⁵ of Nishapur came to pay his respects and sat down beside the Shaikh.

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Šaqqāni⁷⁶ came in. The Shaikh had him sit in a position superior to that of the Sayyed-e Ajall. The Sayyed-e Ajall felt put to shame and enmity arose in his heart.

Then the Shaikh turned toward the Sayyed-e Ajall and said: "Oh Sayyed, if people hold you dear, it is for the sake of Moṣṭafā. If they hold men like these dear, it is for the sake of God."

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was riding through the streets of Nishapur accompanied by a group of Sufis, and they stopped in the bazaar. A band of young men appeared with bare chests, and every one of them was wearing leather trousers⁷⁷. They were carrying one of their companions on their shoulders.

When they arrived before the Shaikh, the Shaikh asked: "Who is this man?"

They replied: "He is the prince of the dice players."

The Shaikh asked the young man: "How did you attain this rank of prince?"

He answered: "Oh Shaikh, I played fair and staked my all."

When the Shaikh heard this reply, he let out a shout and said: "Play fair, stake everything⁷⁸, and be a prince!"

* * *

Kṽāja 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi was our Shaikh's father-in-law and took his meals sitting beside our Shaikh. The Shaikh was teaching him good manners and customs with regard to eating.

One evening Kṽāja 'Ali emptied his bowl. The Shaikh said: "What is this? You'd think, in your greed, you were going to swallow the bottom of the bowl."

The following evening when the table-cloth was spread, Kṽāja 'Ali sat in a different place. The Shaikh, seated at the head of the table-cloth, said: "I don't see Kṽāja 'Ali. Where is he?"

They replied: "Oh Shaikh, at the lower end of the table-cloth."

The Shaikh exclaimed: "Come back here! It's better that I, rather than others, bear the burden of your company."

* * *

Kṽāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

Book Two, Chapter Two

"When K^Vājagak-e Sangāni came to wait upon our Shaikh, he was an elegant young man and wore fine clothes.

One time the Shaikh was being escorted to a banquet, and as was his custom, he rode behind the group of companions. K^Vājagak was riding in front of the Shaikh and was looking at himself.

The Shaikh said: 'Oh K^Vāja, don't ride in front!'

K^Vājagak stationed himself to the rear.

When K^Vājagak had proceeded a few steps further, the Shaikh said: 'Oh K^Vāja, don't ride at the rear!'

K^Vājagak then moved over to the right of the Shaikh and went on a bit further.

The Shaikh said: 'K^Vāja, don't ride on the right!'

K^Vājagak moved to the left of the Shaikh and rode on a few steps.

The Shaikh said: 'Don't ride on the left!'

K^Vājagak became distressed and asked: 'Oh Shaikh, where should I ride?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Oh K^Vāja, put aside your Self and ride straight ahead!'

Then the Shaikh recited the following verses:

'As long as you remain with the you of Self,
What business do you have with this discourse?
This is the Water of Life, fully cleansed of man.'

K^Vājagak let out a shout and, falling at the Shaikh's feet, he repented of his former life. He exclaimed '*labbeyk*⁷⁹, set out for the Ḥejāz and became a man of great distinction."

* * *

K^Vāja Bu'l-Fath, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has also related:

"Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had come from Nishapur to Meyhana, along with a large company of his followers. The next day he spoke before an assembly from a raised platform in front of his blessed sepulchral shrine⁸⁰ and an immense

number of people was seated there. A state of exaltation came over the crowd.

While this was taking place, the shouts of drunken men were heard, as well as other forms of noise and ruckus they were making. For in our Shaikh's neighborhood was a man called Aḥmad-e Bu Šarah. As it happened, the previous night he and a group of people had been engaged in debauchery in his house. Having started drinking again in the early morning, they were raising a great tumult.

The Sufis and the common people raised an outcry. They were upset and the disturbance reached the point where the people said: 'Let us go and pull the house down over their heads!'

The Shaikh was in the middle of his discourse. He declared: '*God is sublime*.⁸¹ They are so absorbed in their vanity that they give no heed to your truth! You, on the other hand, behold a Truth with such clarity and yet it does not absorb you to the point of being unconcerned with their vanity.'

Cries arose from the crowd and they broke into tears and renounced the thought of enforcing what is lawful⁸².

That day went by and the Shaikh said nothing further."

Kṽāja Bu'l-Faḥ goes on to relate:

"The following day I was standing in attendance upon the Shaikh when Aḥmad-e Bu Šarah, in a state of shame, passed in front of the Shaikh. The Shaikh didn't say anything until Aḥmad had gone past him. Then the Shaikh remarked: '*Peace be upon you!* I have not fought with you. I have been a good neighbor. The Prophet has given much advice concerning the neighbor's rights. If sometime you're having a party, come to me as a neighbor and be straightforward, so that I may give you assistance. Don't act like a stranger.'

When the Shaikh spoke these words, Aḥmad fell to the ground and said: 'Oh Shaikh, I promise you I shall never do what I did again.'

He repented of his former life and became a devotee of the Shaikh.

.....

Not much time had gone by when the Shaikh was on the point of transferring from this world to the everlasting abode, and he was giving everyone his final advice. Aḥmad rose to his feet and

Book Two, Chapter Two

said: 'Oh Shaikh, I am an old man and I have not experienced illumination. Now you are departing. What shall I do?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Do not trouble your heart, for whoever has had the light of this candle⁸³ fall on him, the very least God, *He is exalted*, will do for him, is to have mercy upon him.'

* * *

Kvāja Bu'l-Fath, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has also related:

"On Wednesday our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, would go to the bathhouse. Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni⁸⁴, *God have mercy on his soul*, would go to the bathhouse as well and he would converse there with the Shaikh.

One day when the Shaikh and Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni were in the bath together, our Shaikh asked: 'Oh Kvāja, what is the cause of this relaxation and pleasure in the bath?'

Shaikh Bu Moḥammad replied: 'Men are tired and worn out. When they pour hot water over themselves, they experience pleasant relaxation.'

Our Shaikh said: 'You must give a better answer than that!'

Shaikh Bu Moḥammad replied: 'During the week people become dirty, their hairs grow out, and they do not perform the customary practices⁸⁵. When they come to the bath, they shave and cleanse themselves. They feel lighter and experience comfort.'

The Shaikh said: 'You must answer better than that!'

Shaikh Bu Moḥammad replied: 'I don't know any more than that. How does it seem to the Shaikh then?'

The Shaikh said: 'It seems to me that when two opposites⁸⁶ are reconciled, that is what affords so great a pleasure.'

Shaikh Bu Moḥammad burst into tears and said: 'Oh Shaikh what occurs to you, would never occur to any other people.'

* * *

One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly and one of the sons of Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni⁸⁷, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was present. In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh said: "From the days of the prophets up to our own time, those persons who have attained release from the Self and come forth cleansed of the Self, may be

counted on one's fingers and if you wish, we can count them all. If anyone was ever cleansed of the Self, it was the father of this *k^vāja*."

And the Shaikh pointed to the son of Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni.

Then the Shaikh added: "Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: 'The learned scholars of the Muslim community are unanimously agreed that one must know God, *mighty is His glory*, through the intellect. But when Bu'l-Ḥasan looked at the intellect, he found that as far as traveling the mystic path is concerned, it is blind. For unless God gives the intellect sight and shows it the way, it neither sees, nor has understanding.

And I have given a hand to many people and led them out of the delusion of intellect onto the path.'"

* * *

My father, Nur al-Din-e Monavvar, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, while going somewhere in Nishapur, came to a street named the Street of War. There he beheld well-ordered shops filled with sweet smelling herbs and fine fruits. This was an extremely beautiful spot such that no other place in Nishapur was so attractive and well-ordered.

Our Shaikh remarked: 'Bravo! A person whose Street of War is like this, what will his Street of Peace be like!'"

.....

And my father, Monavvar, *God have mercy on him*, has also transmitted the following: "One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, intended to speak before an assembly. When he had come forth and seated himself on the raised platform and the reciters had recited from the Qor'ān, people asked many different questions and the audience was large. Moreover, every person who posed a question, asked about a different kind of problem.

The Shaikh looked on in silence, while they continued to pose numerous questions. Finally, the Shaikh said:

'From the sweetheart of Kotan⁸⁸ I withdraw my hand.
The beloved of Ṭus, Bāvard and Nasā is enough!

Book Two, Chapter Two

God's prayers and peace be upon Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all.'

And the Shaikh drew his hand over his face⁸⁹ and came down from the platform and that day he said nothing more."

.....

My father, *God have mercy on him*, has also related:

"In the beginning of our Shaikh's career, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, when the people of Meyhana still disapproved of the Shaikh, the headman of Meyhana, K^Vāja Ḥammuya, *God have mercy on him*, brought a religious scholar from Saraks to contradict the Shaikh. This scholar spoke before assemblies and pronounced on religious questions.

One day the scholar was present at the Shaikh's assembly and someone asked our Shaikh: 'Oh Shaikh, how much blood of a flea is condoned? How much can there be on someone and he is still fit to perform the prayers?'⁹⁰

Our Shaikh replied: 'The imam of flea's blood is K^Vāja Imam.'

And the Shaikh pointed to the scholar and said: 'Ask him these kinds of questions. When you ask me questions, ask about Him!'"

* * *

It has been related that every Friday our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, sent Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb to K^Vāja Ḥammuya. The Shaikh would give K^Vāja Ḥammuya a message and say something to him. K^Vāja Ḥammuya was very proud of this kind concern and lived for this small attention which the Shaikh paid him.

One Friday during the winter it was extremely cold and the Shaikh and his company were busy with an important matter. The Shaikh called Ḥasan and said: "Go before K^Vāja Ḥammuya and give him my greetings and say: 'It's a cold day today.'"

By means of these words the Shaikh did not neglect to show concern for him even on such a day. That way K^Vāja Ḥammuya's heart would not be pained, as if to say: "The Shaikh has forgotten me during the cold weather."

* * *

One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly and in the midst of his discourse he said: "A time is coming when no one will be able to reside in a *kānaqāh* for one year at a time, or to repose in a cell of seclusion for five months, or to sit still in a mosque for five days.

The present age will be rolled up and come to an end."

.....

Our Shaikh has also said: "A young man went before a spiritual master and asked: 'Oh Pir, say a few words to me.'

The *pir* lowered his head for a moment in thought. Then he raised his head and said: 'Young man, are you waiting for an answer?'

The youth replied: 'Yes, I am.'

The spiritual master said: 'Whatever is apart from God, *mighty is His glory*, is not worth speaking about, whereas, whatever is God, *mighty is His glory*, cannot be expressed in words.

Verily, God, He is exalted, is too magnificent to be described by any description, or named by any name."

* * *

One night during the period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, he and his company were conducted to the *Kānaqāh-e Şonduqi*⁹¹ for a banquet. When they had eaten and recited the evening prayers, they began to perform the *samā'*⁹². And this *kānaqāh* was located in the neighborhood of Sayyed-e Ajall Ḥasan⁹³.

When the *samā'* grew heated and the Sufis entered an ecstatic state and began to dance, their dancing and shouting aroused Sayyed-e Ajall Ḥasan from his sleep. He asked his servants: "What is going on?"

They replied: "Shaikh Bu Sa'id is in the *Kānaqāh-e Şonduqi*. He has been invited for a banquet and now they are performing the *samā'* and the Sufis are dancing."

Sayyed-e Ajall Ḥasan greatly disapproved of the *samā'* and the Sufis. He said: "They have disrupted my sleep. Go onto the roof and throw down the *kānaqāh* on their heads!"

Book Two, Chapter Two

The servants of Sayyed-e Ajall having gone onto the *kānaqāh* roof, broke it open and threw bricks and pieces of bricks down into the *kānaqāh*. Our companions were greatly upset, and the singers and reciters fell silent. The Shaikh asked: "What has happened?"

They replied: "It seems Sayyed-e Ajall's men have come and are throwing bricks down into the *kānaqāh*."

The Shaikh said: "Bring me what they have thrown down."

They placed all the bricks on a tray and brought them to the Shaikh. Meanwhile, Sayyed-e Ajall's servants watched from the roof to see what they were doing.

The Shaikh picked up each fragment of brick one after the other, kissed it and pressed it to his eyes. While he did this, he said: "Whatever comes from the presence of the Prophet⁹⁴, is precious and good, and should be received in the heart and soul.

Is it not extremely bad that we have committed the indiscretion of disturbing the sleep of so venerable a man? We must go back to the *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street."

The Shaikh immediately rose to his feet and mounted his horse. The Sufis of both *kānaqāhs* departed in a group along with the Shaikh carrying lamps, and in the street the singers went on singing as before, all the way back to the *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street. That night the *samā'* was joyful and they spent a pleasant evening.

.....

When Sayyed-e Ajall's servants returned to the sayyed's house, they were weeping and upset. Sayyed-e Ajall Hasan thought the Sufis had mistreated or beaten his men. He asked: "What has happened to make you cry like this?"

They replied: "Don't ask what happened."

Sayyed-e Ajall said: "Quickly, tell me what has happened!"

They replied: "Oh Sayyed, every brick and stone that we threw down into the *kānaqāh* the Shaikh ordered placed on a tray and brought before him. One after the other he picked them up, kissed them and pressed them to his eyes and head. He said: 'This comes from the presence of the Prophet. This is precious and good. Is it not bad that we have committed the indiscretion of disturbing the sleep of such a venerable man?'"

When Sayyed-e Ajall heard their report, he was sorry for what he had ordered them to do. He asked: "And what happened in the end?"

They replied: "Everyone left immediately and they all went to the kānaqāh on 'Adani Kuyān Street."

Sayyed-e Ajall was upset and wept. His disapproval and hostility to-wards the Sufis completely disappeared from his heart. That whole night he was tormented and upset and he didn't sleep at all. He kept saying: "I wish day would come at once so I could go make my excuses to the Shaikh."

.....

Early the following morning Sayyed-e Ajall rose and ordered his horse to be saddled. He mounted up with the intention of going to apologize to the Shaikh. Likewise, our Shaikh ordered his horse to be saddled early that morning, and the Shaikh mounted up and, along with the company of Sufis, went to offer apologies to Sayyed-e Ajall.

Both met each other at the crossroads of Nishapur. There they embraced and having exchanged greetings, sought forgiveness from one another. Each said: "You must return home so that I may come to you to apologize."

This went on until Sayyed-e Ajall said: "If the Shaikh means to accept my apology, he must turn around and go back to the kānaqāh, so that I may come and make my excuses to him and his company and seek forgiveness."

The Shaikh replied: "Sayyed-e Ajall's command is best."

Both turned around and went off to the kānaqāh on 'Adani Kuyān Street. Both great men made their apologies to one another and then the whole group was rendered pure and happy.

Sayyed-e Ajall said: "If the Shaikh finds our excuses acceptable and not to be rejected, this evening the Shaikh must come to my house so that I know my apology has been accepted."

The Shaikh consented and that night went to visit Sayyed-e Ajall. The latter arranged a truly royal banquet in accordance with the customary greatness and generosity practiced by his family. That night the groups of both kānaqāhs were there with the Shaikh and they performed the *samā'* and ecstatic states were experienced.

Sayyed-e Ajall came to have a great attachment to the Shaikh. At first there was complete disapproval but, in the end, unlimited devotion. His devotion to the Shaikh went so far that, during the period our Shaikh resided in Nishapur, Sayyed-e Ajall Ḥasan spent thirty thousand Nishapuri dinars on our Shaikh's behalf.

* * *

It has been related that once during an assembly of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a darvish stood up and started to tell a long story. Our Shaikh said: "Oh generous fellow, sit down and let me teach you something."

The man sat down and the Shaikh said: "What is the point of this long story? The next time you ask for something, say it like this: To speak the truth is loyalty and to tell lies is betrayal. I have need of such-and-such a thing."

The man replied: "I will do thus. With your permission, may I repeat the words to see whether I have learned them or not?"

The Shaikh said: "Repeat them."

The man stood up and facing the Shaikh, he said: "To speak the truth is loyalty and to tell lies is betrayal. I have need of the Shaikh's cloak."

The Shaikh replied: "May it prove a blessing!"

At that, the Shaikh took off his cloak and gave it to the man.

When the assembly was over, the Shaikh came down from the raised platform and the people dispersed. Then our Shaikh's disciples went up to that man and offered to buy back the Shaikh's cloak for one hundred dirhems but he would not sell it. They raised their offer until they reached one thousand dirhems.

Finally, having bought the cloak for one thousand dirhems, they brought it to the Shaikh.

The Shaikh did not accept this and would have nothing to do with the cloak. He gave it to the darvish and let him keep the money as well. He did not allow them to take it back.

* * *

One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Meyhana.

Ḥamza, a knife maker from Azjāh, was a devotee of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd and the Shaikh had the greatest affection for him. Whatever day the Shaikh was to speak before a gathering, Ḥamza would come from Azjāh and be present at the assembly, and when the assembly was over, he would go home.

This day Ḥamza was late arriving and the Shaikh wanted him to be there, for he was a darvish of great humility and quick to become impassioned.

In the middle of the discourse Ḥamza arrived. The Shaikh turned to him and exclaimed: "Come in, oh Ḥamza! Come in, oh Ḥamza! Come in, oh Ḥamza!"

Your face fills the room with painted decoration
And with your wine you've set our cheeks aglow.
Our joy and pleasure you've multiplied by six.
Live happily! You've brought our life delight."

Shouts arose from the Shaikh's assembly and those present experienced states of ecstasy.

* * *

One day early on in his career, our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in a state of spiritual contraction⁹⁵. He set out from Meyhana for Saraks.

.....

It was the Shaikh's practice that whenever he experienced a state of contraction, he would go to visit the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan⁹⁶. After the death of Pir Bu'l-Faḏl, as during his lifetime, the Shaikh went to visit him.

.....

When our Shaikh had set out for Saraks, Loqmān-e Saraks⁹⁷ met him. Loqmān said: "Oh Bu Sa'id, where are you going?"

The Shaikh replied: "My heart is constricted. I am going to Saraks."

Loqmān said: "When you get to Saraks, give my greetings to the God of Saraks!"

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"I was in the presence of Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan in Saraks when someone entered and said: 'Loqmān has fallen ill and is beyond recovery. He asked to be carried to the Rebāṭ⁹⁸ of Burjā. He has been there for three days. Up till now he had not uttered a word

Book Two, Chapter Two

but today he said: "Tell Pir Bu'l-Faẓl Loqmān is about to depart. Ask him if there is anything he wants with me."

When Pir Bu'l-Faẓl heard this, he rose to his feet and said: 'Let us go to see Loqmān.'

And we all went to the *rebāf* in a group.

Catching sight of him, Loqmān smiled. Pir Bu'l-Faẓl sat at the head of the bed and Loqmān went on looking at him. Loqmān's breath was hot and he didn't say a word.

Someone in the group intoned:

'There is no god but Allah!'

Loqmān smiled and said: 'Oh generous fellow, I have paid my taxes and received a receipt⁹⁹. And with regard to professing God's Oneness¹⁰⁰, I have credit to my name.'

The darvish replied: 'But you must bring attention to yourself.'

Loqmān said: 'Are you telling me to raise a tumult at God's divine court?'

Pir Bu'l-Faẓl was pleased by these words and remarked: 'What he says is true.'

Some time passed and Loqmān's breath stopped. Still, he went on looking at the *pir* as before. There was no visible change in his gaze.

The group of devotees began to talk among themselves. Some said Loqmān had died. Others said he had not, since his gaze was still straight and true.

Pir Bu'l-Faẓl said: 'He has died but as long as I am sitting here, he will not close his eyes, for "the friends" do not close their eyes before "friends".'

Pir Bu'l-Faẓl then rose to depart and Loqmān shut his eyes.

God have mercy on them, one and all!"

* * *

It has been related that when our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, came to Qāyen, he was invited to many banquets there. One day a banquet was given on our Shaikh's behalf and when our Shaikh had arrived, a person was sent to K^vāja Imam Bu Sa'īd-e Ḥaddād, who was one of the great men of spiri-

tual distinction of the age, to tell him: "You should come and join us."

Bu Saʿid-e Ḥaddād replied: "For forty years now I have not eaten any person's bread other than my own bread."

The Shaikh was informed of these words. The Shaikh said: "*God is sublime!*"¹⁰¹ For more than fifty years now I have neither eaten my own bread, nor any other person's bread!"

He meant whatever I have eaten belonged to God, and I have recognized it as His.

* * *

On the same occasion that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Qāyen, another imam was there. He was a man of great distinction and was called Kvāja Imam Moḥammad-e Qāyeni. When the Shaikh arrived in Qāyen, he came to visit the Shaikh and most of the time he remained in the Shaikh's company. For the sake of being with the Shaikh, he went to all the banquets the Shaikh was taken to and sat there during the *samāʿ*¹⁰².

One day during the banquet they were performing the *samāʿ*. An ecstatic state had come over our Shaikh and the whole group was in ecstasy. It was a joyous moment.

The muezzin sounded the call for the noonday prayers. Meanwhile, the Shaikh was in this ecstatic state and the group was enraptured and they were dancing and letting out shouts.

In the midst of such a situation, Imam Moḥammad-e Qāyeni exclaimed: "Prayers! Prayers!"

Our Shaikh replied: "We are performing the prayers."

And the Shaikh went on dancing.

Imam Moḥammad left the group and went to pray.

When the Shaikh had come back from his state of ecstasy, he declared: "From where the sun rises to the point where it sets, the sun shines on no one more distinguished or more learned than this man."

.....

That is to say, Imam Moḥammad-e Qāyeni.

.....

"And yet, he doesn't have so much as the tip of a hair's understanding of 'this affair'¹⁰³."

• • •

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was seated with a group of distinguished men in Nishapur -- such men as Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri, Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni and Ostād Esmā'il-e Şābuni¹⁰⁴ -- and each of them was talking about the litanies he performed at night and the invocations he was occupied with. When it came to the Shaikh, they asked him: "What is the Shaikh's litany at night?"

Our Shaikh replied: "All night I say: 'Oh Lord, tomorrow give the Sufis something nice to eat.'"

They all looked at one another and then said: "Oh Shaikh, what sort of litany is this?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Moşţafā¹⁰⁵, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

'Verily, God, He is exalted, gives aid to His servant as long as His servant gives aid to his brother Muslim.'"

They all admitted that the Shaikh's litany was perfect and that there was no litany superior to this.

.....

The subtle point in this story is this. The Shaikh showed them that: "In reciting litanies and performing prayers, you are acting for the sake of a reward in the afterlife and seeking higher rank. And that is for the advantage of your Self. Even though you seek the good, you want it for your Self.

All my time, my litanies and prayers, have been solely employed for seeking the good of others and, for that reason, are superior.

And so, among the sayings of one of the great shaikhs it occurs that when addressing God, he said: 'Oh Lord God, on the day of resurrection make my limbs and members so big that they fill the seven levels of Hell. Let there be no room for anyone else.

Then every punishment You intended to inflict upon your servants, apply to my carnal soul alone, so that I may take revenge on my carnal soul and not see it attain its desire. As for all your servants, may they be released from their ordeal.'

The mystic community's hostility towards their own carnal soul has always been such, and such has been their intercession on

behalf of mankind and God's servants -- *He is exalted and sublime!*"

* * *

Emām al-Ḥaramayn Abu'l-Ma'ālī-ye Joveyni¹⁰⁶ has related:

"One day my father, Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, said: 'Rise to your feet and go before Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr. (*God sanctify all their souls!*) Whatever the Shaikh says, retain in your memory so that you can tell me.'

I went before the Shaikh and when he had inquired after my well-being, he asked: 'What are you reading?'

I replied: 'Controversies¹⁰⁷.'

The Shaikh exclaimed: 'There must be no controversy! No controversy! No controversy! There must be concordance.'

I returned home. I went before my father and told him what the Shaikh had said. My father remarked: 'From now on don't read Controversies. Read jurisprudence and religious science.'

I followed these instructions until, due to the blessing of their attention, my religious learning reached its present high degree."

* * *

It has been related that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was once on his way to Herat, accompanied by a large following, and there were reciters with him as well. Now they arrived at the village of Rikā.

.....

This is a village located two *farsangs*¹⁰⁸ from the city of Herat. In that village was a man by the name of Shaikh Bu'l-ʿAbbās-e Rikā'i, a man of great distinction who possessed miraculous powers, and he had a brother, a highly esteemed man of pious life style. They were always together and had a villa, as is the custom of the people of Herat. This was where they spent their time and whenever a Sufi or one of the 'people of life'¹⁰⁹ arrived, they would put him up in that place, treat him politely, and offer him entertainment and hospitality. But they disapproved of the *samā'*¹¹⁰.

.....

Book Two, Chapter Two

When our Shaikh arrived there, they put him up in their villa and immediately prepared a fine meal. Once they were finished eating, the Shaikh said: "Recite a verse."

Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās replied: "It is not our practice to sit and listen to the *samā'*."

Our Shaikh said to his singer: "Come and sing a verse."

The reciters chanted a particular verse and there was no opportunity for the two brothers to say anything. An ecstatic state came over our Shaikh and he experienced a joyful moment. He rose to his feet and began to dance. At that, the Shaikh's whole entourage got up and danced as well.

However, Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās inwardly felt some disapproval.

Our Shaikh took Bu'l-'Abbās by the hand and drew him towards himself, to make him join in the dancing. But Bu'l-'Abbās held back. Our Shaikh said: "Look there!"

Bu'l-'Abbās gazed forth at the countryside. He saw that all the mountains and the trees and the buildings were dancing in accompaniment to the Shaikh.

Involuntarily, Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās began to dance as well. He took his brother by the hand and exclaimed: "Come along, my brother, and dance! We're no earth to this man's shovel!"¹¹¹

Both brothers began to dance. Their disapproval disappeared and thereafter they never disapproved of the *samā'* but constantly desired it.

And at present that villa still exists. People arriving in those parts make a pilgrimage to the villa because our Shaikh's footsteps had reached it and he had stayed there and experienced peace there.

.....

That day the Shaikh remained there but the following day he went to Herat.

When the Shaikh reached the city gate, he declared: "Islam has entered this city but unbelief has not yet left it."

When he entered the city, he went to the the *kānaqāh* where *Kālu* resided. *Kālu* came forth to meet the Shaikh. They met one another in the vestibule of the *kānaqāh* and they saw one another. The Shaikh did not say a word but departed from there and went to the house of the *qāzi* of Herat. The Shaikh entered the house and sat down. The *qāzi* was informed and rushed forth barefoot. He sat before the Shaikh on both knees¹¹² and said: "Oh Shaikh, at least say something!"

Our Shaikh replied:

"Love of this world is the root of all sin."

The Shaikh said nothing more than this and rose to his feet. The *qāzi* begged and pleaded at length with the Shaikh to stay a while longer. The Shaikh did not do so but left the house.

.....

While the Shaikh was riding along his way, one of the people of Herat placed his hand on the Shaikh's saddle strap and walked beside him. As they proceeded, he asked the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what do you say about the Qor'ānic verse:

'The Merciful sits upon the throne...' 113

Our Shaikh replied: "We have old ladies in Meyhana who remember that God existed long before there ever was a throne."

.....

Then our Shaikh rode on with the intention of leaving by the city gate. He came to a neighborhood where there was a large ditch of foul water which they call Jacob's *Kāy*, *kāy*¹¹⁴ being a term they use for such a ditch.

A man was standing at the edge of this ditch of water and calling: "Oh Pearl!"

Thus he went on shouting and when he had shouted for some time, a woman put her head out of the house. She was old, of black complexion, pock marked, and with large teeth -- and of reprehensible character.

When the Shaikh and his group of followers caught sight of the woman, our Shaikh exclaimed: "This kind of ocean would contain a pearl like this!"

.....

And our Shaikh set out for the city gate which is called the Sardarah Gate. When the Shaikh came near the gate, a certain man who was there, made a remark that vexed him. In reply the Shaikh uttered words indicating that there would not be buildings erected at that gate as at the other gates.

Indeed, from that time up until now no buildings have been erected around that gate and no people reside there, whereas

Book Two, Chapter Two

around each of the city of Herat's other gates there are buildings and markets, houses and beautiful, high villas and many people reside at those spots.

.....

Then our Shaikh left the city and a large number of people came forth to bid the Shaikh farewell and to look at him. Our Shaikh turned around and said to them:

"Oh people of Herat, verily, I behold you faring well but I am frightened on your behalf!"

And the Shaikh departed without saying any more than this and didn't stay longer than one hour in the city of Herat. He had the table-cloth spread out in the countryside.

* * *

Several of the distinguished offspring of Šeyk al-Eslām 'Abdollāh-e Anšāri¹¹⁵, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, have transmitted the following:

"Šeyk al-Eslām 'Abdollāh-e Anšāri has said: 'In my early youth when I was pursuing "this affair"¹¹⁶ and wished to experience a revelation concerning "this higher meaning", I undertook acts of self-mortification and waited upon masters of the mystic path and venerable men of religion. Thus I pursued "this affair" and I sought assistance from their spiritual attention and by having them invoke God on my behalf.

Despite all this, my tongue was accustomed to saying obscenities, so that unintentionally obscene words constantly passed my lips. Inwardly I found this loathsome and disapproved but as hard as I tried, I could not eliminate these obscenities from my speech. And so it continued until the time I went to Nishapur.

Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur and I went to visit him with this problem on my mind. The Shaikh was seated and a devotee who was waiting upon him, was dipping boiled turnip in powdered sugar and giving it to the Shaikh. And the Shaikh was eating it.

When I entered the room, the Shaikh had a turnip in his hand. Half of it was eaten but the Shaikh was holding the other half in his hand. When I came in, he placed that other half in my mouth with his own hand.

From that moment on obscenities have never passed my lips, nor have I said anything else I shouldn't.

Futhermore, the gift of speech concerning higher truth was bestowed on me and whatever now flows forth from my tongue, is all due to that half of a turnip which the Shaikh placed in my mouth with his own hand, and the blessing of the Shaikh's attention -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*"

* * *

It has been related that one time in Nishapur our Shaikh Bu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had contracted a debt of five hundred dinars on behalf of the Sufis.

One day he said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Have my horse saddled, so we may go to Āsatow to see Bu'l-Faẓl-e Forāti. He is able to pay off this debt."

When his horse was saddled, the Shaikh set out accompanied by a group of followers.

Meanwhile, a darvish went on ahead and brought the news to Bu'l-Faẓl-e Forāti that the Shaikh was coming to see him concerning the debts and told him what the Shaikh had said in Meyhana.

Bu'l-Faẓl-e Forāti came forth to meet the Shaikh and having received the Shaikh with much respect, he gave him accommodation with the greatest possible honor. For three days he provided fine hospitality with lavish foods and during those three days was always on his feet waiting upon the Shaikh. He was never absent from the Shaikh's service.

On the fourth day before the Shaikh had said a word, or made any reference to the matter, Bu'l-Faẓl weighed out five hundred Nishapuri dinars and gave them to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, saying: "This is for the Shaikh's debts."

Then he weighed out another hundred dinars and gave it to Ḥasan, saying: "This is for the journey's provisions."

And he gave him another hundred dinars and said: "This is for the Shaikh's souvenirs¹¹⁷."

Then Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb went and told the Shaikh what had happened.

Our Shaikh asked: "Oh Bu'l-Faẓl, what blessing shall I invoke for you?"

He replied: "Whatever the Shaikh thinks best."

The Shaikh said: "Shall I ask God, *He is exalted*, to take back your worldly goods?"

Book Two, Chapter Two

Bu'l-Fazl replied: "No, oh Shaikh! If I had not possessed worldly wealth, the Shaikh's blessed footsteps would not have arrived here and I would not have had the occasion to be of service to the Shaikh, nor had the power to release your heart from cares."

Our Shaikh said: "Oh Lord God, do not abandon him to the world but let his worldly goods be provisions for the journey to the hereafter and not an affliction."

And the blessings of the Shaikh's prayer reached Bu'l-Fazl-e Forāti, as well as his offspring. Bu'l-Fazl became one of the great men of his day and age and undertook many charitable works. Likewise, his offspring attained high stations, both in the world and in the realm of religion. They were among the famous men of Khorasan.

* * *

During the period that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, he said to Hasan-e Mo'addeb: "Rise to your feet and fetch a singer who will sing something for me."

Hasan-e Mo'addeb went out and searched everywhere throughout the city but couldn't find anyone. When he was exhausted, people pointed to a young man in a place of ill repute¹¹⁸. Hasan went to find him but the young man was drunk.

Hasan returned to the Shaikh and said: "Oh Shaikh, I have searched the whole city but could not find anyone, except a young man who is drunk."

The Shaikh said: "Bring him to me just as he is."

Hasan went and brought him before the Shaikh. Indeed, the Shaikh's seeking him was the cause of that young man's good fortune. The youth entered the *kānaqāh* but he was virtually unconscious. When he came before the Shaikh, the Shaikh said: "Oh young man, sing some verses!"

The youth sang a verse in a garbled manner, like semi-conscious drunks do, and then he fell asleep right there. The Shaikh said: "Put him to bed."

They put him to bed comfortably and the Shaikh gave them his own robe to put over him. The youth slept for a while and when he woke, he wept and shouted out: "Where am I?"

Hasan went to him and explained: "You're in Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr's *kānaqāh*. The Shaikh called you here to sing some verses."

Weeping and sobbing, the young man stood up. He went from one Sufi to the other falling at their feet, until he came to the Shaikh. Then he kissed the Shaikh's feet and hands and said: "I have repented of my former life."

The Shaikh placed his blessed hand on the young man's head and sent him to the bathhouse. The young man said to the barber there: "Cut off my hair."¹¹⁹

The barber cut off his hair and the Shaikh sent his own robe to the bathhouse so that the youth would put it on and return to the *kānaqāh*.

For thirty years the young man served the darvishes and remained within the mystic community. And he became a man of great distinction within the mystic community, due to the blessing of the Shaikh's attention.

* * *

The following also concerns the period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, and *K*Ṽāja Bu Ṭāher was there with him. *K*Ṽāja Bu Ṭāher has related:

"One day the Shaikh said: 'Saddle my horse!'

When the horse was saddled, the Shaikh mounted up and set out with his entourage. The Shaikh was riding along a road and we were accompanying him. On the road in the middle of the bazaar a female musician, intoxicated, and with her face unveiled and made-up after the fashion of such women, approached our Shaikh. The Shaikh's group shouted at her and told her: 'Get out of the Shaikh's way!'

The Shaikh said: 'Let her be.'

When the woman came up to the Shaikh, the Shaikh recited:

'You're drunk and gaily dressed in the bazaar.

Have you no fear, oh friend, you may get caught?'

An ecstatic state came over the woman and she wept profusely. She then went into a nearby mosque and from there called to one of the Shaikh's devotees. The Shaikh said: 'Go in and see what she wants.'

The darvish went inside. Everything the woman had with her in the way of clothing, fine ornaments, gold and jewels, she removed and placed in a piece of cloth. This she gave to the darvish

and said: 'Bring this to the Shaikh. Tell him I have repented of my former life and wish him to give me his favor.'

The darvish brought everything she gave him to the Shaikh and reported what she had said. The Shaikh exclaimed: 'May it prove a blessing!'

And the Shaikh immediately ordered that everything the woman had sent be sold right there for white bread, roast lamb, halva and incense. Then the Shaikh and his entourage, just as they were, set out for the countryside.

Meanwhile, a proclamation of free food was sent round and an enormous gathering of the common people set out on the Shaikh's tracks.

The Shaikh and his company went into the countryside and the Sufis imagined that this banquet would be for them. However, when the porters arrived with the food, the Shaikh ordered it all to be placed before the common people.

The Shaikh told the people to set about eating but he did not order the Sufis to eat with them. The Shaikh with the group of Sufis stood to one side and watched and the Shaikh ordered the aloes-wood and incense to be put on the fire.

When these fragrances burned and their smoke rose into the air, an ecstatic state came over the Shaikh. He raised a shout and said: 'Whatever arrives on a puff of air, is carried off by wind and smoke.'¹²⁰

When the common people had eaten part of the food and carried off the rest so that nothing remained and they were finished, the Shaikh returned to the city.

As for the female musician, she remained firm in her repentance and came to be one of the well-known women of virtue, due to the blessing of the Shaikh's attentions."

* * *

Kvāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"During the period our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, Seyf al-Dowla¹²¹ was the governor of Nishapur and he was one of the great sultans of that time. One day he came to visit the Shaikh in his *kānaqāh*. Weeping profusely and showing great respect for the Shaikh, he said: 'You must accept me as a son.'

The Shaikh replied: 'Oh Ebrāhim, you're choosing a high rank. It mustn't be that the requirements will be more than you can fulfill.'

He said: '*If God is willing*, with the Shaikh's blessings and favor I will fulfill them.'

The Shaikh asked: 'Do you accept not to commit any wickedness and to be good to the Muslims and to hold the army back from inflicting wickedness on the peasants? And do you promise to practice justice?'

He replied: 'I accept.'

Our Shaikh said: 'I have accepted you as a son.'

After that Seyf al-Dowla made obeisance and left.

.....

From that very moment he began to practice justice and lead a virtuous life, so much so that he came to be famous throughout Khorasan and Iraq for his justice and virtuous actions. He became proverbial for his virtue, fairness and his manly generosity, due to the blessed attentions of our Shaikh – *God sanctify his awesome soul!*"

* * *

During the period our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, one day he had spoken before an assembly in the *kānaqāh* of Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri¹²² -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* As the Shaikh was returning to his own *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street, Ebrāhim Ināl¹²³, the brother of Sultan Toğrel, appeared coming toward him on the road.

When Ebrāhim saw our Shaikh, he got off his horse and coming before our Shaikh, lowered his head and made obeisance. Our Shaikh said: "Lower your head further!"

He bent his head down lower.

The Shaikh said: "Still lower!"

He lowered his head further, until his head almost touched the ground.

The Shaikh said: "It is complete. *In the name of Allah*, mount up!"

He mounted his horse and the Shaikh rode on and returned to the *kānaqāh*.

As it happened, a certain darvish thought to himself: "What can this mean that the Shaikh has ordered Ebrāhim Ināl to make obeisance to him?"

Our Shaikh turned to the darvish and said: "Oh darvish, don't you know that whoever presents me with greetings, does so for His sake? My bodily frame is the *qebla*¹²⁴ of mankind's striving to draw near to God and yet the goal is God -- *great is his glory!* I, in fact, do not exist.

Every act of obeisance which is for God's sake -- the more humble it is, the more acceptable it is. Therefore, I ordered Ebrāhim Ināl to bow before God and not before me."

And then the Shaikh said: "The Ka'ba has been fixed as the *qebla* for all Muslims, so that men may prostrate themselves before Him. The Ka'ba itself doesn't really exist.

He has accorded me the honor of being the *qebla* of mankind, so that men may pay me respect. But I do not exist."

The darvish fell to the ground and came to realize that not everyone is capable of understanding what the spiritual masters do. One should make no objection, either openly or in one's heart, to anything they do, for their acts are always right.

* * *

*K*Ṣāja Bu 'Ali al-'Oṣmāni, *God be pleased with him*, has handed down the following sound tradition. He has related:

"I heard our Shaikh Abu Sa'id b. Abi'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, say: 'I once beheld Moṣṭafā¹²⁵, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, in a dream. He had a crown on his head and wore a belt around his waist.

The Commander of the True Believers, 'Ali, *God be pleased with him*, stood behind him and Bu'l-Qāsem-e Joneyd and Bu Bakr-e Šebli¹²⁶, *God sanctify both their souls*, were seated in front of him.

I greeted the Prophet and asked: "Oh Prophet of God, what do you say concerning the Friends of God?"

Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, replied: "He is one of their number and he is one of them. But you are the last of them. When you have passed away, no one will remember this after you."

And he pointed to each one of them."

.....

The compiler of these blessed words has this to say. In Ṭus I heard the following from the most illustrious Amir Imam ‘Ezz al-Din Maḥmud-e Ilbāshi-ye Ṭusi, *may God lengthen his life*, who said that during his youth he had heard it in school from Imam ‘Abd al-Raḥim. The latter had the report from his father, KVāja Imam ‘Abd al-Karim-e Azjāhi, who said he heard it from Shaikh Bu Sa‘id-e Bu’l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, who has said:

"One time I beheld Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, in a dream and he said to me: 'Oh Bu Sa‘id, just as I, who am Moḥammad, was the last of the prophets, you are the last of all the Friends of God. There shall be no *vali* after you.'

And he removed a ring from his blessed finger and gave it to me."

* * *

One time our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Meyhana. Half-way through the Shaikh's discourse a darvish arrived from Transoxania¹²⁷ and joined the assembly. He sat down in front of the Shaikh's raised platform. When the Shaikh brought the assembly to a close that day, the darvish made his obeisance to the Shaikh and then stayed on for three days.

Every day our Shaikh spoke before an assembly and this darvish came and sat in front of the Shaikh's raised platform. The Shaikh would turn to him and make some fine remarks. On the fourth day, the darvish let out a shout in the midst of the assembly and rising to his feet, said: "Oh Shaikh, I must know just what sort of man or what sort of thing you are!"

The Shaikh replied: "Oh darvish, on my purse there are no purse strings and with God's creatures I have no quarrels."

At that the darvish sat down.

When the Shaikh had brought the assembly to a close, the darvish put on his shoes and set out for Transoxania.

In Transoxania there were spiritual masters of great distinction and it was their custom to sit together in a circle. In this manner each person would say something and present an instructive point.

When that darvish returned, he sat down in their midst. Everyone said some words and then it was the darvish's turn to speak. They said to him: "Come, tell us what you have brought back from Khorasan!"

Book Two, Chapter Two

He replied: "I beheld a spiritual guide in Meyhana who said many good things. But I was unable to retain that. I asked him: 'What sort of man are you and what are your circumstances?'"

He answered: "There are no purse strings on my purse and I have no fights or quarrels with God's creatures."

All the *pirs* rose to their feet together and turning their faces towards Khorasan, prostrated themselves out of respect for the Shaikh's spiritual state. They exclaimed: "For a person such as this you can place your face on the ground, for nothing of himself has remained within him. He is all Truth."

* * *

During the period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri¹²⁸, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, did not meet our Shaikh for one year and disapproved of him. But whatever happened to the Shaikh, people would come and tell Ostād Imam and whatever happened to Ostād Imam, was reported to our Shaikh.

Moreover, Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem was constantly making remarks in accordance with the disapproval he felt towards our Shaikh and the Shaikh would be informed of this. The Shaikh, however, would say nothing.

One day it passed the lips of Ostād Imam: "What it comes down to is this. Bu Sa'id loves God, *He is sublime and exalted*, whereas, in my case, God, *He is sublime and exalted*, loves me. The difference between him and me is that on this path I am an elephant, while he is a gnat."

Someone reported these words to the Shaikh. The Shaikh said to the person: "Go before Ostād Imam and tell him: 'You are the gnat as well! I am nothing at all.'"

The darvish came before Ostād Imam and told him what the Shaikh said. From that moment on Ostād Imam promised himself not to say anything bad about the Shaikh again, nor did he ever do so.

And thus it remained until that time when Ostād Imam attended the Shaikh's assembly and Ostād's hostility was transformed into agreement and friendship. And that story has already been presented in written form.¹²⁹

* * *

During this same period that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, one of the religious leaders of distinction was taken ill. Our Shaikh went to visit him and sitting down beside him, asked after his condition.

A group of the imam's stewards entered the room. One of them said: "Such-and-such an estate needs so much seed!"

Another said: "Such-and-such a property needs a building constructed on it."

And one of them said: "Such-and-such a garden needs a better gardener than it has at present."

Each of the stewards had something like this to say. The imam, despite his illness, gave answers to all of them and ordered what each one should do. He was wholly absorbed and immersed in these matters.

When the imam came back to himself, he turned to the Shaikh to apologize to him. Our Shaikh said: "The illustrious *k^vāja* imam ought to die better than this."

The imam came back to his senses and realized that the Shaikh was right. He replied: "Our sight cannot reach the level attained by the Shaikh's sight and footsteps."

And he sought God's forgiveness for his behavior.

* * *

Also during the time our Shaikh was in Nishapur, one day he went to the cemetery of Hira where Darzakiya¹³⁰ is located. When he arrived at the tombs of the spiritual masters, he caught sight of a group of people drinking wine and playing music.

The Sufis were greatly upset and were about to forbid the irreligious behavior. They intended to do them some harm and to beat them. But the Shaikh would not allow it.

When the Shaikh had come close to the group, he exclaimed: "May the Lord see to it that, just as you are happy in this world, you are happy in the world to come."

The whole group got up and every one of them fell in front of the Shaikh's horse. Pouring out the wine and breaking their musical instruments, they repented of their former life.

They became men of virtue, thanks to the grace of our Shaikh's blessed glance – *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was going to Marv-e Rud. When he reached Bağšur, he saw that it was an especially unattractive place but the inhabitants were men of virtue and distinction. Most of them were imams and men of learning and piety.

It is reported that there were more than one hundred *moftis*¹³¹ and men of firm religion in Bağšur and all the common people of the city were upright.

.....

It has been related that one of the sultan's agents¹³² intended to commit an act of depravity in the city. All at once the common people and the elite gathered together and declared: "We will absolutely not allow anyone to practice iniquity in our city. We do not want our children to learn that it is possible to commit sin."

And they went to great lengths with this dispute and in the end they did not submit.

.....

When our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, arrived at Bağšur, he exclaimed: "This city is a Hell for these people of Paradise!"

And from there the Shaikh went to Marv-e Rud.

When Qāzi Huseyn, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, beheld the Shaikh, he became the Shaikh's devotee. And the Shaikh remained there a few days.

A darvish was celebrating his son's circumcision and invited the Shaikh and his group of followers. The Shaikh and the Sufis went and when they had eaten, they performed the *samā'*¹³³. A state of ecstasy came over the Shaikh.

Still in such a state the Shaikh mounted his horse and went to the *kānaqāh*, accompanied by the Sufis. Meanwhile, the singers went on playing and singing as they passed through the middle of the city. And the people disapproved of this.

They went before Qāzi Huseyn and told him what the Shaikh had done and they voiced their disapproval and were very hostile. Qāzi Huseyn wrote a letter to our Shaikh to the effect that: "The people greatly disapprove and are protesting against this behavior."

Our Shaikh wrote the following verses on the back of the letter and sent them to Qāzi Ḥoseyn:

"Bad character acts as an amulette for his beauty.
If not, the people's evil eye would destroy him."¹³⁴

When the qāzi read these verses, he wept and the hostility of the inhabitants disappeared.

* * *

It has been related that when our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went to the city of Marv and the events involving Pir Bu 'Ali-ye Siyāh and K^Vāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz took place -- as has been written down earlier on¹³⁵ -- the Shaikh left the kānaqāh with the intention of going out into the countryside.

Along the way a certain k^Vāja by way of devotion, walked beside the Shaikh in attendance. When the Shaikh arrived before the door of the k^Vāja's house, the man took hold of our Shaikh's reins and beseeched him, saying: "The Shaikh must enter my house so that the grace of his blessed footsteps will remain in this place."

Since the k^Vāja was insistent, the Shaikh dismounted and entered the house along with his group of followers. In this house there stood a great pillar and many beams had been placed on top of it, in such a way that most of the building's weight rested on that pillar.

When the Shaikh beheld that pillar, he said:

"By virtue of your uprightness you carry what you carry!"

When these words had passed the Shaikh's lips, the k^Vāja said: "Yes, oh Shaikh, I have incurred such great expense because of this pillar. I had to employ so many carts and undergo so much trouble in order to transport this pillar here. There's no pillar like this in the whole city."

Our Shaikh exclaimed: "*God is sublime!*"¹³⁶ Where am I and where is this man!"¹³⁷

The Shaikh rose to his feet and left the house. As much as the k^Vāja beseeched him, he would not stay. Nor did he go anywhere else in Marv to stay. He went to the *rebāt*¹³⁸ of 'Abdollāh-e

Book Two, Chapter Two

Mobārak and that is where he alighted. And from there he returned to Meyhana.

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Fath, the Shaikh's grandson, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"During the period our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, one day a pair of pants was sewn for him. They were washed and purified and hung on a line to dry.

The pants disappeared. Everyone said: 'Who would be so bold with the Shaikh's clothing? Who would have the authority?'

They began discussing the matter. Meanwhile, the Shaikh was sitting under the kānaqāh's porch and said nothing.

There was an old man sitting by the Shaikh and the Shaikh loved him dearly and treated him with intimacy.

The Sufis said: 'Let's look through everyone's belongings¹³⁹. We'll search and examine each person and see who has it.'

They started with the old man who was sitting in the Shaikh's company. They laid hands on him and found that he was wearing the pants.

When the Shaikh beheld this, he ordered: 'Put his belongings out in the street!'

The old man's belongings were put outside the kānaqāh and the old man left. From the moment he left the Shaikh's kānaqāh, no one ever saw him again. None of the Shaikh's Sufis or the visiting Sufis knew where he was."

* * *

It has been related that in Nishapur a merchant brought our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a Turkish slave girl. That slave girl waited upon the Shaikh and she was endowed with wondrously firm faith and "in need"¹⁴⁰. She served the Shaikh well, and did so with eagerness and keen devotion.

The Shaikh gave the slave girl to KVāja Bu Ṭāher.

The slave girl came before the Shaikh and wept, saying: "Oh Shaikh, I never thought you would dismiss me from your service!"

The Shaikh replied: "Bu Ṭāher is a part of me. I am an old man. You should belong to him¹⁴¹. I am not dismissing you from my service."

Thereafter this slave girl joined Kṽāja Bu Ṭāher and waited upon him but she also undertook in person many services for the Shaikh. She performed numerous litanies and became a prodigy on the path of religion. She came to attain such a praiseworthy spiritual state that one day our Shaikh said to her:

"Who was it brought you here from Turkistan?
Tell him to go and bring another like you."

This slave girl was the mother of Kṽāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the grandson of the Shaikh.

* * *

The following is among our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's sayings, *God sanctify his awesome soul*: "We set out to go to Kuhestān¹⁴². When we reached Bost, we came to a village named Ṭoroq. Here we alighted and asked: 'Has one of the spiritual guides ever lived here?'

They replied: 'Yes, there was such a man. He was called Dād.'

We went to this *pir's* tomb. There we paid our respects and experienced a moment of complete peace. A group of people came forth from the village. We said: 'We would like to find someone who had seen Dād, to ask him something.'

They replied: 'There is an ancient old man who is the only person in the village who has seen him.'

We sent someone after him. The old man came and he was a very majestic looking man. We asked him: 'Oh aged man, did you meet Dād?'

He answered: 'I was a child when I saw him.'

We asked: 'What did you hear him say at that time?'

He replied: 'I was not capable of understanding his words but one of his sayings I remember.'

We said: 'Tell it to us.'

The old man said: 'One day someone wearing a patched cloak arrived by the highroad and went before him. After greeting him the man said: "I shall take off my traveling shoes, oh Shaikh, so that I may find some peace in your presence. Indeed, I have wandered over the whole world and have neither experienced any peace, nor met anyone else who enjoyed peace."

Book Two, Chapter Two

Dād remarked: "Oh negligent one, why have you not fully relinquished your Self, so that you might find peace and people at large might find peace through you?"

We remarked: "That was a perfect saying the *pir* said. No saying is superior to this. Our goal has been attained. You have given yourself trouble. Return home."

Then turning to one of his followers, our Shaikh said:

"All this is nothing but your Self. If you kill it, well and good; if not, it will kill you. If you beat it down, well and good; if not, it will beat you down. If you keep it occupied, well and good; if not, it will keep you occupied."

Then the Shaikh said:

"A created being only reaches another created being by traveling to it, whereas a created being only reaches the Creator by submitting to Him. Submission to Him consists of killing the Self and desire.

*'And they shall kill and they shall be killed for a promise that is true -- a promise in the Torah and in the Gospel and in the Qor'ān. For who is more faithful to his agreement than Allah? Therefore, rejoice in the pact that you have contracted with Him. Indeed, this is the magnificent deliverance.'*¹⁴³

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, God sanctify his awesome soul, has related:

"One day an atheist¹⁴⁴ passed by the circle of Bu'l-Hasan-e Nuri¹⁴⁵. Bu'l-Hasan was speaking about Pure Reality, to the effect that: 'In the language of the Sufis He is called the Real. However, in each language, God is referred to by a different name.

Some people -- those who are in need of daily sustenance -- call Him the Merciful. Others call Him the Compassionate, since they wish for Paradise. And there are those who call Him the King. They want high position. Whatever each person is in need of, he addresses God by that name.

The Sufis call Him the Real, because they do not defile their hands with anything that is not God, nor do they consider any-

thing but Him. Therefore, the word they use, that is the Real, is more pure.'

At that point the atheist said to Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Nuri: 'You say the Real. And what does this mean?'

He replied: 'That He contaminates mankind with abundant contaminations but He Himself remains untainted by anything.'"

.....

And the Shaikh added:

"He is sublime and He is untainted by whatever men say or think or imagine about Him. In the Qor'ān, in the Torah, in the Gospel and in the Psalms of David there are ninety-nine names for God. But the greatest name is the Sublime.

When you say the Sublime, you have said them all. And if you say all the names but do not say this one, you have said nothing. Everything is tied to this name and when you pronounce it, everything becomes unlocked and sins are eradicated.

Just as with the prayer beads of old ladies there are a thousand beads but one of them is the biggest and placed at the beginning and called 'the muezzin'. When that one breaks, all the others are set free. In the same way when you say the Sublime, you receive everything.

You must strive in repeating the Sublime many times. All His creation is saying: '*God is sublime!*', but because of the negligence in your heart you do not hear it.

The nightingale that varies its melodies a thousand different ways, sings the Sublime but you hear melodies.

God, *He is exalted*, has declared:

*"There are no creatures that do not celebrate His praises."*¹⁴⁶

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said during an assembly:

"People beheld me in a dream. I was dead and my chin was tied closed but I went on talking. Someone in the dream said: 'Don't say to the people that "they"¹⁴⁷ are talking. If "they" speak, this is how "they" speak.'"

And the Shaikh said: "Once you are dead, He still remains.

Book Two, Chapter Two

The servant is dead but He still exists, as He has always existed."

* * *

A Qor'ānic reciter sang this verse from the Qor'ān in the Shaikh's presence:

"He Who has charged you with the Qor'ān, verily¹⁴⁸ He shall restore you to your former abode."¹⁴⁹

Our Shaikh said: "Concerning this verse the commentators have said:

'By this God means the conquest of Mecca.'

I say God would not use an oath, if He were referring to the conquest of Mecca.

By this God means the meeting of the 'brothers'."

ANECDOTES AND INSTRUCTIVE POINTS

The following instructive points were uttered by our Shaikh Abu Sa'id at different times and places -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Omar b. al-Kaṭṭāb asked Ka'b al-Aḥbār¹, *God be pleased with them both*: 'What is the most succinct verse you have found in the Torah?'

Ka'b replied: 'I have come across the following in the Torah. God, *praise be to His name on high*, says:

"He who seeks Me, shall find Me. And he who seeks other than Me, shall never find Me."

And opposite to this there was written:

"Verily, virtuous men's yearning to encounter Me has been long but I desire even more ardently to meet them."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Yazid-e Baṣṭāmī² said: 'God, *He is sublime and exalted*, is Single. You must seek Him by isolating³ yourself from the world. You seek Him with ink and paper. How will you find Him?'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A certain wise man has remarked: 'When you came into the world, you were weeping, while people laughed. Strive so that when you die, you are laughing, while others weep.'

Wherever men speak of you, I smile and laugh.
Life passes out of me but I smile and laugh.⁴"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Šebli⁵ said: 'Anyone who has been given one atom of knowledge concerning the science⁶ of God's Oneness, because of the weight placed on him, will be too weak to support a gnat.'"

And our Shaikh recited:

"Then your love came and tightly gripped my heart.
Now the lame fox can chase me from the forest."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The most noble word concerning God's Oneness is what the Prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, declared:

'He is Sublime Who provided no other path for His creatures to know Him than to admit that they are impotent to know Him.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Yusuf b. al-Hoseyn⁷ said: 'Whoever has fallen into the ocean of God's Oneness, grows thirstier every day. His thirst will never be appeased because he has a thirst for truth and that is only quenched by the Real.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Joneyd⁸ said: 'The Oneness of God which is professed by the Sufis, consists of: separating the created from the non-created, going forth from one's native land, rejecting attachments, and putting aside what one knows and what one does not know, so that in place of all this there is the Real.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Instructive Points

"A man came before Zu'l-Nun, the Egyptian⁹, and said: 'Invoke a blessing on my behalf.'

Zu'l-Nun replied: 'If you have any previous acquaintance with religious science based on a sincere profession of God's Oneness -- all invocations have existed before you did. Otherwise, how will the shouts and cries of onlookers save a drowning man?'

If I bear this love for you to the very grave,
I'll shout for joy but know the feat was yours."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"K^vāja Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Pušanji¹⁰ was asked: 'What is faith and what is trust in God?'

He replied: 'You eat what is in front of you and chew each mouthful well with a tranquil heart, knowing that whatever belongs to you, you will not lose.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu 'Abdollāh al-Rāzi¹¹ said: 'Cold and hunger had taken hold of me. Then I fell asleep. I heard a heavenly voice say: "Do you imagine serving God consists of praying and fasting? Submitting to God's decrees¹², *He is exalted*, is more noble than performing prayers and fasting.'"

* * *

The Shaikh was asked:

"What is Sufism?"

He replied: "What we see as Sufism is polytheism."

They said: "Oh Shaikh, why is that?"

He answered: "Sufism consists of keeping the heart from the other or anything not He. But there is no other or anything not He."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One day Joneyd¹³ was seated among a group of darvishes and was speaking about the generous gifts and bounty of God – *His glory is magnificent!* A darvish exclaimed: *'Praise be to God!'*

Joneyd said: 'Utter the full praise, just as God, *He is sublime*, has declared. Say: *"Praise be to God, Lord of the Creation!"*

The darvish asked: 'And who are the inhabitants of creation that they must be mentioned along with Him?'

Joneyd replied: 'Dear friend, say the full phrase: *Praise be to God, Lord of the Creation!* For when you join the created with the non-created, the created is annihilated at its side and the non-created remains.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Šebli¹⁴ would often repeat: *'Allah, Allah, Allah!'*

People asked him: 'Why do you say *Allah*, but you don't say: *There is no god but Allah?*'

He replied: 'I am afraid to mention Him in negative terms. I fear that death might overtake me while saying *there is no god* and I would not reach *but Allah*.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"*There is no god* is the path of 'this affair'¹⁵ and *but Allah* is the final goal of 'this affair'. Until a person has been steadfast for years in *there is no god*, he will not reach *but Allah*."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Mo'āviya b. Abi Sofyān¹⁶ said: 'Whenever the whip suffices, I do not order the sword to be used, for even if there is only a single hair between me and all the people, that hair never breaks.

When they pull, I give in and when they let loose, I pull.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Instructive Points

"In *Kalila and Demna*¹⁷ it says: 'A person cannot resist or match a powerful sultan other than by bending the neck to him.

And this is like the example of the fresh grass.

Whenever the wind grows overbearing, the grass abandons itself to the wind and is pressed flat to the earth. In the end the grass is saved, whereas sturdy trees that will not bow their necks, are torn up by the roots.

.....

And when you see a lion and are frightened by it, grovel and humble yourself on the ground. That way you may escape, for the lion is powerful but he is generous.

.....

Do not be deceived by a weak enemy, for a strong beast of burden may be frightened, or even brought to destruction, by a paltry twig.

.....

And fire doesn't burn a candle's wick, the way hatred can consume a whole tribe.

.....

Likewise, reproach is better than hatred kept inside and a blow that imparts good counsel is better than salutations from an enemy of evil intentions."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"To educate a fool is like giving water to a colocynth. The more water it drinks in, the bitterer it becomes."

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"The wise man is he who, when a task arises, gathers all opinions and examines them with attention in order to extract what is right and abandon the rest.

As is the case of the man who has lost a dinar in the soil. If he's clever, he collects all the earth that is in the area and carefully passes it through a sieve, until the dinar reappears."

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"A bedouin had a son who departed from this world. The bedouin took to lamenting. People said: 'Be patient, for God, *He is sublime and elevated*, has promised rewards unto the patient.'

The bedouin replied: 'How can someone like me¹⁸ have patience before the power of God, *He is sublime and exalted*? By Allah, to lament what He has done, pleases Him more than our bearing up patiently, for such patience turns the heart black.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Šebli¹⁹ said: 'There were once two friends who remained for some time in one another's company, whether traveling or at home. It so happened that they had to make a sea voyage.

When the ship was out at sea, one of the friends went close to the ship's edge. He fell into the water and was submerged. Then the other friend threw himself into the water as well.

The ship dropped anchor and divers plunging into the water, brought the friends back to safety. When they had rested a while, the first friend asked the other: "Even if I fell in the water, what, at any rate, came over you?"

He replied: "Through you I was absent from myself, to such an extent that I took myself for you.'"

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"A caliph had a cousin whom he loved dearly. One day they were both sitting beside a well. The caliph's ring fell into the well. The girl took off her own ring and threw it into the well.

The caliph asked the girl: 'Why did you do a thing like that?'

The girl replied: 'I have known parting. Since a state of union and intimacy exists between us, I didn't want your ring to know the anxieties of separation. I gave my ring to be its companion.'"

* * *

The Shaikh has recited:

Instructive Points

"Oh you whose face, bright as the light of day,
Guides the believers in God's Oneness. Oh you,
Whose hair is black as night in the heretic's grave.
I am the foremost among your band of lovers,
As you have precedence in Beauty's train,
As a particle precedes the Arabic verb²⁰.
Meccans take pride in the Ka'ba, Basrans vaunt
Their city's tide²¹. The Christians admire bishops.
Descendants of 'Ali revere their forebears.
But this mere slave takes pride in two dark eyes
That appear beneath the veil above your cheeks."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A boy stopped before the circle of Šebli's²² followers and said: 'Oh Abu Bakr, remove me from myself and make me absent from myself and then give me back to myself, so that I am He and He is I and I am I and He is I.'

Šebli said: 'Where did you get such a way of talking? May you be struck blind!'

The youth replied: 'Oh Abu Bakr, how could I ever be blind to Him?'

Then he ran away from Šebli."

Our Shaikh recited:

*"When you look at me, it's Him you see.
When you look at Him, it's us you see."*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Yahyā-ye Ma'āz²³ says: 'As long as the bondsman²⁴ is seeking, he is told: "You have no power to choose. You are not a commander with your own authority."

But when the bondsman has attained annihilation, he is told: "If you wish, abandon your search, for if you choose, your choice is through Us, and if you abandon your search, your abandoning, as well, is through Us. Your choice is Our choice and your action is Our action."

Today the beloved responded to my love.
Call for my horse at the commander's court²⁵."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:
"Sahl b. 'Abdollāh²⁶ says: 'The most difficult of veils between
God and His bondsman is pretension²⁷.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:
"The Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, declared:

'Whoever does not accept the excuses of an offender who seeks a pardon, whether sincerely, or by way of deception, shall not drink at my pool.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:
"ʿAbdollāh b. al-Faraj al-ʿĀbed says: 'I counted fourteen thousand benefits of the same kind during one day and night.'
He was asked: 'How do you arrive at this number?'
He replied: 'I counted my breaths during one day and night. There were fourteen thousand breaths.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:
"Moḥammad b. Kašnām²⁸ says: 'A doctor who gives you bitter medicine so that you get better, is more caring than one who gives you sweets and makes you ill.
And any spy who puts you on your guard so that you are safe, is kinder than a person who reassures you, though later you will be in fear.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Instructive Points

"A king asked his vezier: 'When is it that a man is noble?'

The vezier replied: 'When seven qualities occur in him together.'

The king asked: 'And what are they?'

He answered: 'First, the highmindedness of free men; second, the shame of virgins; third, the humility of bondsmen; fourth, the generosity of lovers; fifth, the authority of kings; sixth, the knowledge and experience of old men; and seventh, a concealed innate intelligence.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Ja'far-e Qāyeni says: 'I heard the following from my father who said: "Men take pride in four things but they do not interpret their meaning properly: nobility, wealth, learning and piety.

They imagine that honor comes from a man's noble descent, whereas nobility is goodness of character. For the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

'A man's nobility is his character.'

And they imagine wealth is an abundance of possessions, whereas wealth is actually richness of the heart.

Likewise, knowledge is a light which the Lord, *He is sublime and exalted*, casts into His servant's heart.

And they imagine piety is giving up luxury, shrinking into oneself and wearing a sour face. But piety is refraining from what has been forbidden by God – *He is sublime and exalted!*"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A bedouin had a slave girl whose name was Zohra. He was asked: 'Would you like to become Commander of the Faithful²⁹, if it meant your slave girl would die?'

He replied: 'I would not, for should my Zohra depart from life, the affairs of the Muslim community will be thrown into disorder!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A landowner said to his steward: 'I want you to buy me a donkey that's not too big and ugly nor too small and despicable, one that can carry me up and down slopes. It must not get tired when doing hard work and should pass straight over stones. If I give it a little fodder, it should make do and if I give it a lot, it should increase in size.'

The steward replied: 'Oh Kṽāja, I don't know where to find qualities like that except in Bu Yusof, the qāzi. Ask your Lord God to change Bu Yusof into a donkey for you.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A man from among the Jews came before the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali³⁰, *God be pleased with him*, and said: 'Oh Commander of the Faithful, who is our God, *mighty is His glory*, and what is He like?'

The complexion of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali, *God be pleased with him*, changed and he said: 'God is devoid of the attributes of existence and above description. He is as He has always been. He is without qualities. He has no beginning and stands before all beginnings. He is without limit and end. All ends, except Him, pass away and disappear, for He is the end of ends.

Oh Jew, did you understand this or not?

The Jew replied:

'I bear witness that anyone on the face of the earth who says other than this, is false. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and Moḥammad is the Prophet of God!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The chief of the mystic community, Joneyd³¹, says: 'You will not catch a whiff of God's Oneness, as long as He has some right over you which you have not fulfilled. For "this affair"³² demands its full right.'"

Instructive Points

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Once a darvish came forth from the desert, having suffered hunger for a long time, and he had a friend with him. They had reached Kufa³³ and they went to a date grove. The darvish asked for charity and the owner of the grove said: 'Go in and climb a tree. Eat as much as you want and take with you what you wish.'

The darvish climbed up a palm tree, while his friend sat beneath the tree. The darvish's foot slipped and he fell from the tree. A thorn of the palm tree caught in his belly and cut him up to his chest.

The darvish looked at himself and when he saw his slashed belly, said: '*Praise be to God, I have not died before seeing you as I wished you -- my stomach empty, my belly cut open and my soul about to pass out of me. And you deserve worse than this!*'"

.....

And our Shaikh said: "In all circumstances be your own enemy unto yourself!"

.....

"His friend came to him to bind up his belly. When he lifted the darvish's robe, the darvish recited:

*'I shall remove my train by myself today.
Now night is day and day is night for me.'*

And the darvish said: 'Here no sinfulness at all remains!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"God's beauty and bounty wish to pardon His servants' sins. His sovereignty is manifested in His forgiving you, whereas your offense is manifested in your punishment."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sari-ye Saqatī³⁴ who was the maternal uncle and teacher of Joneyd³⁵, fell ill. Joneyd came to visit him and picked up a fan to cool him with. Sari said: 'Oh Joneyd, the wind makes fire grow more fierce.'

Joneyd asked: 'How are you doing?'

Sari replied:

'Like a purchased slave "who has no power over anything"³⁶.'

Joneyd said: 'Give me some precept!'

Sari said:

'Do not be distracted from association with God by association with anything other than Him.'

Joneyd remarked: 'If I had heard this earlier, I would not even have associated with you.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"God, He is exalted, revealed to David: 'Oh David, tell My servants that I did not create them for My own advantage but I created them that they might have an advantage from Me.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Bakr-e Kattānī³⁷ was a man of great distinction and a religious scholar. He had undertaken many practices of self-mortification, such that few persons had attained a rank as high as his.

One of his acts of ascetic discipline was that for thirty years he sat in the Hejr³⁸ under the Roof Gutter³⁹ in Mecca and during that period, in the course of one day and night, he would only perform a single purification⁴⁰ -- in the morning. This was difficult because he never slept at night. In fact, he didn't sleep at all.

One day during his sojourn in Mecca, a majestic looking old man wearing a cloak entered through the Banu Seyba Gate⁴¹ and came before him. He greeted Abu Bakr with 'salaam' and said: 'Oh Abu Bakr, why are you not going to the Maqām-e Ebrāhim⁴²

Instructive Points

where the people have gathered to hear Traditions of the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, that you may hear them as well?'

Indeed, an old man of great distinction had come who possessed exalted⁴³ Traditions and he was dictating them.

Abu Bakr raised his head and said: 'Oh Shaikh, who is he transmitting from?'

He replied: 'They go back to Bu Horeyra through Zohri, Ma'mar and 'Abd al-Razzāq-e Ṣan'āni⁴⁴.'

Abu Bakr said: 'Oh Shaikh, you cite a long chain of transmission. Whatever they are reciting over there as a Tradition with a chain of transmission, I hear without the chain of transmission right here.'

'Who do you hear it from?'

He replied:

'My heart reports to me directly from my Lord.'

The old man asked: 'What proof is there that you are capable of this?'

Abu Bakr replied: 'The proof is I know you are Keẓr⁴⁵.'

Keẓr said: 'Up until that time I imagined there was no Friend of God I could not recognize. That was until I met Shaikh Abu Bakr-e Kattāni, for he recognized me but I did not recognize him.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq⁴⁶ came before Bu 'Ali-ye Ṣabbu'i⁴⁷ in Marv and I myself was in Marv at the time.

Pir Ṣabbu'i knew the *Ṣaḥiḥ* of Bokāri⁴⁸ by heart and was a scholar of Traditions of the Prophet. It is from him that I learned the *Ṣaḥiḥ* of Bokāri. The *pir* also had a complete knowledge of 'this higher meaning'⁴⁹ and it was he who brought Ostād Bu 'Ali into 'this matter'⁵⁰.

Pir Ṣabbu'i said to Bu 'Ali: 'Say something to me about "this higher meaning".'

Ostād Bu 'Ali replied: 'Talk of this subject is closed for me. I have no access to it.'

Pir Šabbu'i said: 'It is fitting that I present my need, so that out of my need the door of speech may open before you. Mystic inspiration is a fire and need is the tinder.'

Ostād Bu 'Ali consented and an assembly was convoked. However, as he stood in the pulpit, the doors of speech would not open for him, for the people present were unworthy of it.

Pir Šabbu'i entered the mosque. As soon as Ostād caught sight of him, Ostād's speech was unlocked.

When the assembly came to a close, Pir Šabbu'i said: 'You are as you always were. This was from us.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"What is necessary is need. There is no shorter road between the servant and God than need. If need falls on solid rock, a spring of water gushes forth.

This is the fundamental principle and it particularly belongs to the darvishes. It is a mercy which God has accorded them."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Once in summer at the hour of the midday nap during the hottest part of the day I met Pir Šabbu'i, who was walking through the dust and dirt. I said: 'Oh Shaikh, where are you going?'

He replied: 'Over here to Raziq⁵¹, where there is a *kānaqāh* with darvishes inside. I have taken down in dictation⁵² that whoever is among darvishes during the midday nap, one hundred and twenty mercies will rain down upon him in one day -- especially at that time.

Now I'm going there so that I may receive a share of this mercy."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Attach yourself to the darvishes and show yourself to be their friend. (verse:)

Though sad at heart, present yourself as a lover."

Instructive Points

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sari-ye Saqaṭi⁵³ resided in the bazaar of Baghdad. He had a shop but he had nothing in the shop to sell. A small curtain hung across the shop door and there inside Sari performed prayers. And every day he performed twelve thousand *rak'ats* of prayer.

One time someone arrived from Mount al-Lokkām⁵⁴ to visit him. He was directed to the bazaar and came to the door of Sari's shop. The visitor lifted the curtain and greeting Sari-ye Saqaṭi with 'salaam', said: 'Pir so-and-so from Mount al-Lokkām sends you his greetings.'

Sari replied: 'He was originally from here. Retiring to the mountains is not manliness. The real man is engaged with God in the middle of the bazaar among the people and his heart is not empty of Him for a single instant.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās would often⁵⁵ say: 'Any disciple who performs a single service for a darvish, receives more benefit than comes from one hundred *rak'ats*⁵⁶ of supplementary prayers.

And if he eats one less mouthful of food, he benefits more than if he prayed all night.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A darvish wandered far and wide and undertook journeys but he experienced no relief, nor found any peace. He became sore at heart.

He lay down under a thorn bush and pulled a blanket over his head. Just then his heart filled with ecstasy. He raised his face toward the heavens and exclaimed:

'Oh Lord God, You are here with me under this cover! And I have been searching for You in the deserts all these years.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One day Joneyd⁵⁷ came outdoors and met a young boy who was rather upset. The boy said: *'Oh Shaikh, how long will you keep me waiting?'*

Joneyd replied: *'Did we have an appointment?'*

The boy said: *'Indeed we did! I asked Him Who changes hearts to direct your heart to me.'*

Joneyd answered: *'What you say is true. What can I do for you?'*

The young man said: *'I have come for an answer concerning the saying:*

"When the soul struggles against desire, its disease becomes its remedy."

Joneyd replied: *'Yes, these diseases kill men at large. When it opposes desire, its sickness becomes a cure.'*

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"Morta'eś⁵⁸ said: *'I have several times made the pilgrimage to Mecca all alone, without a cord or a bucket or anything. But I realized I did all this to gratify my concupiscent soul.'*

People asked: *'How so?'*

He replied: *'Because one day my mother asked me to fetch her a pitcher of water. I brought it to her but I felt annoyed.*

Then I knew that all else I had done was to satisfy the desire of my concupiscent soul.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sofyān-e Sowri⁵⁹ said: *'If someone remarks "What an excellent man you are!" and this pleases you more than his saying "What a bad man you are!", know you are still a bad man.'*

Instructive Points

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"There once was a weaver who had risen to become a vezier. Every morning he would get up and taking a key, unlock the door of a room and all alone go inside for a while. Then he would come out and go to attend upon the prince.

The prince was informed of what the vezier did and became curious to know what was in that room. One day he followed the vezier and suddenly entered the room.

In the room he beheld a pit, such as weavers use in their work⁶⁰. And he saw that the vezier had his feet in the pit.

The prince said: 'What is this?'

The vezier replied: 'Oh Prince, all the good fortune I have known belongs to the prince. I have not forgotten my beginnings. This is what I was. Every day I remind myself who I am, lest I fall into error.'

The prince removed his ring from his finger and said: 'Take this and put it on your finger. Until this moment you were a vezier. Now you are a prince!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bāyazid⁶¹ used a lion for a mount and brandished a viper as a whip. Still, when he prayed, he would say:

'Oh Lord God, I am wrapped in Your veil. If You removed Your cover from me, I would be put to shame.'"⁶²

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq⁶³ was speaking before an assembly. He had grown heated and the people present were experiencing ecstasies.

A man from the audience asked: 'I see all this but where is God?'

Ostād Bu 'Ali replied: 'I myself am upset by this as well.'

The man said: 'If you don't know, don't speak about it.'

Bu 'Ali replied: 'Then what could I speak about at all?'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"People said to Bāyazid: 'You claim that a person who goes on a journey, sets out for God's sake and God is with him. But why should he set out, when the goal may be reached at home as well?'

Bāyazid replied: 'There are lands that cry out to God, *He is exalted*: "Oh Lord God, show me a Friend from among Your Friends and illuminate my sight with the arrival of a Dear One."

God, *He is exalted*, has them undertake journeys so that the desire of that locality may be fulfilled."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"There was a learned jurist in Marv known as Dānesmand-e Dustān who never came out of his house. As it happened, one day he did come out and was sitting in a mosque.

Someone brought a little food and put it down before him. He reached out his hand and began to eat.

After a while when he had eaten, a dog entered the mosque. The dog attacked him and began pulling on his robe. The jurist said: 'You have nothing to worry about as far as I'm concerned. I won't hold myself back from you. I know Who has sent you and prompted you. But these others are ignorant. I don't know whether they will leave you alone.'

After a moment, the muezzin entered the mosque and struck the dog. The dog began to howl. The jurist looked at him and said: 'I told you I wouldn't refuse you my person but that I didn't know whether the others would leave you alone. One friend never refuses anything to another friend.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A learned jurist said to a spiritual master in the city of Samarqand: 'Write down some of these sayings for me.'

The spiritual master replied: 'For thirty years I have been grappling with one phrase:

"He who forbids his soul to pursue desires..." ⁶⁴

Instructive Points

And I have still not proven a match for it."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"On the day of resurrection Eblis⁶⁵ will be summoned with the devils and asked: 'Was it you who led all these people astray?'

He will reply: 'No, I merely invited them. They should not have responded to me.'

He will be told: 'That's over and done with. Here is Adam! Bow down, so you may be saved.'

Then the devils will cry out: 'Quickly! Bow down, so that we and you may escape from this ordeal!'

Eblis, breaking into tears, will say: 'If it depended on me, I would have bowed down that first day. He says: bow down! But He doesn't want it. Had He wanted it, I would have prostrated myself that very first day.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I went before Bu Bakr-e Jowzaqi⁶⁶ and said to him: 'Quote a Tradition for me.'

He opened a fascicle and read out this Tradition for me: 'God, *mighty is His glory*, possesses two armies. One is in the heavens, dressed completely in blue. The other is on earth and is made up of Khorasan.'

Now, the army on earth is the Sufis who will conquer the whole of Khorasan."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One time a Sufi⁶⁷ had fallen in love with a boy. The beloved's name was Aḥmadak. He needed to talk to someone about Aḥmadak. Since he didn't find anyone, he went to where he saw some day labourers and said to one of them: 'Good fellow, how much do you want for the day?'

He replied: 'Three dirhems, as well as three meals.'

He took this man home, brought him something tasty to eat, and weighing out three dirhems of silver, gave it to him. Then he

said: 'Now sit down here. I'm going to tell you all about Aḥmadak. You just nod your head. That's our business together.'

The man sat there a while. Then he said: 'Oh K^vāja, if you have any other work, tell me so I can do it. It's getting late in the day.'

He replied 'My business with you is this. I speak and you nod your head and say yes.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"In my village there was a man who committed an act of ego-tism. His horse had been killed. The man who'd caused this, said: 'I will pay you compensation.'

The first man replied: 'I don't want anything but my very horse itself.'

They went to war and people from all about were involved. In the end one thousand young men were killed, their wives became widows, their children were orphaned and their mansions were destroyed.

All this was the result of that man's 'I'."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A retainer of Maḥmud⁶⁸, *God have mercy on him*, saw him in a dream and asked: 'How is it with the sultan?'

He replied: 'Hush! How can you call me sultan? I am a nobody. God is the Sultan. What was before was a mistake!'

The man asked: 'But what has happened to you?'

Maḥmud replied: 'They make me stand here and interrogate me on every little detail: "What did you do? From whom did you take and to whom did you give?"'

Someone else has carried off my treasury, while all that is left for me is sorrow, pain and anguish -- and much remorse.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Zakariyā⁶⁹, *peace be upon him*, put his trust in a tree. He said: 'Oh Lord God, tell the tree to protect me.'

Instructive Points

God said: 'You have put your trust in a tree and take refuge with it? Now you will see what's going to happen to you!'

When the tree closed round Zakariyā, one end of his cloak was left sticking out. When they came close to the tree, they noticed this and said: 'He's inside this tree!'

They brought a saw and set it to the tree. They began sawing from the top and cut their way down the length of the tree as far as the brain of Zakariyā's head -- *peace be upon him!* When the saw reached Zakariyā's brain, he could not endure and let out a cry.

Then came a voice: 'Be quiet! You put your trust in a tree. Now you raise up a cry? If you had put your trust in Us, We would have protected you even outside the tree. Now you are complaining and crying out?

Be quiet! If you utter a sound or let out a sigh, I will bring the world crashing down upon you.'

And so the poor wretch was unable to utter a sound, and he put up with it."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One man said to another: 'Come and be my guest.'

The other person agreed and the first man said: 'Whom would you like to have transport you into *samā'*⁷⁰?

The man replied: 'Well, first give me a taste of your wine.'

The host gave him some wine. This amount of wine caused a state of joy to come over the man. He said to his host: 'If you give me two cups of this wine, I won't have need of anyone who induces *samā'*. I will cause a thousand persons to experience *samā'* myself.

Each time I taste this wine, the seven parts⁷¹ of my body become an ear and all I hear in *samā'* is:

*"And their Lord will give them a pure beverage to drink."*⁷²

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"What they hold in their hands is wind. And Solomon, too, possessed but wind:

*'Unto Solomon was the wind.'*⁷³

Know that Solomon desired kingship for forty years, years as reckoned in the next world. Therefore, they will keep him waiting in the sun while they count. They will say: 'Come now, you were a king!'

The other prophets will enter Paradise forty years ahead of him."

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"The spiritual masters have declared: 'Our Lord likes to strike a person and beat him and throw him from one side to the other, until He has brought him low and annihilated him and no trace of him remains.

Then in the light of His eternity He manifests Himself before that pure dust.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Ḥafṣ⁷⁴ used to be a blacksmith and strike iron with a hammer. Once he told his apprentices: 'Strike!'

They struck the iron numerous times till it was pure.

The *pir* said: 'Strike!'

They replied: 'Oh Ostād, where should we strike? It has become pure. No flaw remains!'

Bu Ḥafṣ let out a shout and threw his hammer away and gave his shop over to be plundered.

He became a spiritual master of great distinction."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"They asked Abu Bakr-e Ṣeddiq⁷⁵, *God be pleased with him*: 'Whom do you wish to be like?'

He replied: 'A man whom God, *He is exalted*, has not created.'"

.....

Instructive Points

People asked: "Oh Shaikh, someone whom God, *He is exalted*, did not create – what would he be good for? He wouldn't have any characteristics at all."

Our Shaikh replied: "'Uncreated' is not to be taken in the sense you imagine, i.e., that God has not created him. But having created him and endowed him with all the attributes, God then cleansed him of all this and raised him to such a state of purity that you say he is 'uncreated'. All the usual impurities are not present in him."

And our Shaikh said: "Pir Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni⁷⁶ has said: 'The Sufi is uncreated.'

He meant this in the same sense."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A man said to 'Abdollāh b. al-Mobārak ⁷⁷: 'I have converted a Jew to Islam and cut the belt of his infidelity'⁷⁸."

'Abdollāh replied: 'You cut the belt of his infidelity? What have you done with your own belt of infidelity?'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A bedouin ⁷⁹ *was asked: 'Do you acknowledge the Lord?'*

He replied: 'How could I not acknowledge Him Who has sent me hunger, made me naked and impoverished, and caused me to wander from country to country?'

As he spoke thus, he entered a state of ecstasy."

* * *

One day our Shaikh was speaking before an assembly. In the midst of his discourse he turned toward Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri⁸⁰ and said: "Was it not you who quoted Ostād Bu Eshāq-e Esfarāyeni⁸¹ as saying:

"The people, one and all, are the family dependents of the Sufis with regard to God's Oneness."

He replied: "Yes, it was."

The Shaikh remarked: "Then pay attention to what he says!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I went to visit Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Rahmān-e Solami⁸². The first time I met him, he said to me: 'I will write you something in my own hand as a souvenir.'

I replied: 'Do that!'

In his own hand he wrote: *'I heard from my ancestor Abu 'Amr b. Nojeyd al-Solami, who had it from Abu'l-Qāsem al-Joneyd b. Moḥammad al-Baḡdādī⁸³, who said:*

"Sufism is tempered character. Whoever surpasses you in character, surpasses you in Sufism."

And the best thing ever said in commenting on character, is what al-Šeyk al-Emām Abu Sahl al-Šo'lukī⁸⁴ said:

"Character consists of refraining from objection.""

* * *

Our Shaikh often repeated:

"An old man set out in a boat and his provisions ran out. One piece of dry bread remained. He put it in his mouth but his teeth had no effect on it.

He broke it with his hand and threw it into the sea.

Swelling into a wave, the sea asked: 'Who are you?'

The bread replied: 'A piece of dry bread.'

The sea said: 'If you keep company with me, you'll turn into a moist delicacy⁸⁵'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I was in the city of Marv and met Bibi Šarrāf. She said: 'Oh Shaikh, He doesn't let anyone in the whole world offer me a drink of water or greet me with "salaam". Moreover, while men at large all wish to escape from themselves, if only for one moment, I wish to know, if only for one moment, just where I stand.'

Instructive Points

At the end of her life a fire welled up inside her and she burned with passion."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said⁸⁶:

"A man possessed an abundance of goods and thought he would engage in trafficking. He boarded a ship.

The ship was wrecked and the goods and merchandise sank. Everyone aboard perished. Only he survived, clinging to one of the ship's planks. By chance he reached a deserted island.

Years passed by and he was without a friend or companion. He grew distressed and sore at heart. One day sitting at the edge of the sea, naked, with his hair grown long and his clothes worn out, he recited these verses:

*'My kinsmen I shall reach when the raven turns white.
Alas, when will the raven ever turn white?'*

Then he heard someone's voice coming from the sea:

*'Perhaps in the wake of your present suffering,
There will appear a joyful deliverance.'*

That is to say, oh fellow, do not give up hope! For all you know, some deliverance is about to follow upon this pain and hardship you are experiencing just now.

The next day the man looked out to sea and saw something large. When it had come closer, it turned out to be a ship⁸⁷. When they beheld the man, they asked: 'What has happened to you?'

He replied: 'My story is a long one.'

They said: 'But come, you must tell us.'

And he related his story and told them what city he was from.

They asked: 'Didn't you have a son?'

He replied: 'I had a son who was a small child.'

Thereupon they all fell about him and kissed him. The man exclaimed: 'What has come over you?'

They answered: 'This is your son! And this is his ship and we are his servants. And whatever belongs to him, belongs to you.'

They then cut his hair and dressed him in splendid clothes and they said: 'Now, if you like, let us set out for home.'

He replied: 'Let us depart!'

So they all set out with him and brought him back home in comfort. (verse:)

Though an affair is blocked, it will open again.
After every pain redoubled gladness shall return."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"There was a time when a certain jurist from Azjāh would come and speak before an assembly in the mosque that stands in the middle of the village of Meyhana -- at the head of Nāvsār Street.

When he brought his discourse to a close, he would raise his voice and say:

*"Then they are returned to God, their true Master. Verily, He possesses the judgement and He is the swiftest to settle accounts."*⁸⁸

* * *

One day a poet rose to his feet before our Shaikh to recite a poem. He began thus:

"What would these vicissitudes of Time from me?"

The Shaikh exclaimed: "Enough, enough! Sit down. By mentioning yourself at the beginning, you've taken away the savor⁸⁹."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Ḥāmed-e Dustān was walking along a road with a companion. The fellow said: 'I have a relative here. You wait here while I go in and pay a family visit.'

Bu Ḥāmed sat down. Meanwhile, the other man went inside and didn't come out all night. And that night there was a heavy snowfall.

The following day when the man came out, there was Bu Ḥāmed moving about in the snow with snow dropping off him. The man said: 'Are you still here?'

Instructive Points

He replied: 'Didn't you say wait here? Friends maintain fidelity to the friends.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The Dog of Byzantium⁹⁰ sent an envoy to the Commander of the Faithful, 'Omar⁹¹ – *God be pleased with him!* When the envoy arrived, he asked for 'Omar's residence and it was pointed out to him. He said to himself: 'What sort of caliph is this that I have been sent to?'

When he saw the door of the residence, it struck him as strange. He asked those on hand where the caliph was. They replied: 'He has gone to the cemetery.'

He set out to find the caliph. He found him in the cemetery, stretched out in the sand and dozing. At that the envoy exclaimed: 'You have passed judgement and seen that justice is done. As a result, you sleep in security. Our emperor has passed judgement but has not practiced justice. He has placed guards on the roof and does not sleep securely.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I was in Marv. There was an old lady there called Bibiyak Sayyār. She came before me and said: 'Oh Bu Sa'id, I have come to complain of an injustice.'

Our Shaikh said: 'Tell me what it is.'

She replied: 'People pray God not to abandon them to themselves, even for the space of the blinking of an eye. For thirty years I have been asking to be left to myself, if only for the blinking of an eye, so that I might see where I am, or if I really am at all.'

And it still has not happened.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A man passed by an assembly being held by Yaḥyā b. Ma'āz al-Rāzi⁹². Yaḥyā was preaching and giving advice. The man said to him:

'How much you know about the mystic path but how ignorant you are about the Lord of the path!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Pir Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan⁹³ was asked: 'Invoke God, for there has been no rain.'

He replied: 'Yes, I shall.'

That night there was a heavy snowfall. People exclaimed: 'What have you done?'

He replied: 'I ate a *tarina-vā*⁹⁴.'

That is to say, I felt cold and the world grew cold."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Pir Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan was asked to pray for the sultan -- that is Sultan Maḥmud⁹⁵ -- that he might recover his health. Pir Bu'l-Faḥl thought for a moment and then said: 'This matter seems too small to me.'

That is to say, he is not the one to consider!"⁹⁶

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"People beheld Bu Ḥamza-ye Nuri⁹⁷. His outer appearance was utterly dishevelled, his hair grown long, and his clothes dirty. Someone remarked: 'This outer disorder is indicative of inward disorder.'

He replied:

'Not at all! God, He is exalted, resides within the inner hearts and raises them up. But He is remote from bodies and gives them no consideration.'"

Instructive Points

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu'l-Hasan-e Nuri⁹⁸ said:

'Men of mystic knowledge only know a little about a little, for they know the guide or the path. The Real lies beyond that.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Oveys-e Qarani⁹⁹ said:

'Whoever loves three things -- softness in speech, softness in food, and softness in clothes -- Hell-fire is "closer to him than his own jugular vein".'"¹⁰⁰

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu Ya'qub-e Nahrajuri¹⁰¹ was a shaikh of great distinction. Despite that, he did not for one instant decrease his ascetic practices and acts of devotion. And yet, he did not experience any joy in his heart, even for a moment.

Thus, during his intimate converse with the Divine Majesty, *He is sublime and exalted*, he complained. In his innermost heart a voice declared:

'Oh Bu Ya'qub, know you are a bondsman and rest at ease!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"A darvish came before Šebli¹⁰² and said: 'Oh Shaikh, if a person is asleep, is he considered to have journeyed while asleep?'

Šebli replied: 'If he has slept in the shade of sincerity, his very sleep is the forecourt of the halting station.'"

And our Shaikh added:

"Šebli's words are the same as what the Prophet has said, God's blessings and peace be upon him:

"The sleep of the man of learning is an act of worship."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The divine voice declared to Moses, *peace be upon him*: 'Tell the people of Israel to choose the best man from their midst.'

They chose one thousand persons.

The divine voice declared: 'Choose the best from these thousand.'

They chose one hundred men.

The divine voice declared: 'Choose the best from these hundred.'

They chose ten men.

The divine voice declared: 'Choose the best from these ten.'

They chose three men.

The divine voice declared: 'Choose the best from these three.'

They chose one man.

The divine voice said: 'Tell this unique man to bring Me the worst person from among the offspring of Israel.'

The man asked for a period of four days. He wandered about, until on the fourth day he came to a particular street and there saw someone who was known for wickedness and improper deeds. This person practiced various forms of immorality and debauchery, so much so that he was notorious for such behavior.

He was about to take this man away, when the thought entered his heart: 'One must not judge according to appearances. It is possible that this man is possessed of worth and rank. I must not write him off because of what people say, nor should I be deluded because men at large have said I am the best.'

Since whatever I decide will be based on conjecture, it is better to apply the conjecture to myself.'

Placing his turban band around his neck¹⁰³, he came before Moses and said: 'As much as I have searched, I cannot find anyone worse than myself.'

The divine voice declared to Moses: 'This man is the best of them all, not because his worship is greater, but because he considered himself the worst.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Instructive Points

"Bu Bakr-e Vāseṭī¹⁰⁴ said: 'The sun is streaming into the room through a window and motes become visible in the room. Wind arises and sets these motes in motion in the midst of the light. Doesn't this cause you a fright?'"

Those present replied: 'No.'

He said: 'In the heart of one who professes God's Oneness, the whole universe is like the mote in the sunlight, set in motion by the wind.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Šebli¹⁰⁵ said:

'A Sufi is not a Sufi, until he has taken all mankind as a family charge upon himself.'"

And our Shaikh added:

"This means the Sufi looks at all mankind with compassion and considers it his duty to shoulder their burden, for he perceives their captivity and helplessness under God's omnipotence and he knows they are subject to the divine decree and the will of God."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Bu 'Oṣmān-e Mağrebi¹⁰⁶ said:

'God's creatures are moulds and bodies, acted upon by the decrees of Omnipotence.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Moḥammad b. 'Alī al-Qaṣṣāb¹⁰⁷ said:

'Sufism was a spiritual state. It became a form of discourse. Then the spiritual state and the discourse disappeared and deceit remained.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I heard the following from Shaikh Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Ali b. al-Moṣannā¹⁰⁸ in Astarābād:

'On a Friday after the prayers I was with Šebli¹⁰⁹ in the Congregational Mosque in Baghdad. Just then someone in Sufi dress came up to him and asked: "What is union?"

Šebli turned to him and said: "Oh you who ask about union, drop the two inclinations and you have attained union."

The man asked: "Oh Abu Bakr, what are the two inclinations?"

Šebli replied: "A mountain peak has arisen in front of you and it separates you from God."

The man asked: "Oh Abu Bakr, explain what you have said about the mountain peak. What is this mountain peak?"

He replied: "This world and the world to come, for our Lord, He is exalted, has declared:

'There are those among you who desire this world and there are those among you who desire the world to come.¹¹⁰ But where is he who desires God?"

Then Šebli said: "When you say Allah, He is Allah and when you are silent, He is Allah. Oh Allah, Allah! Oh He Who is He and no one knows what He is except Him -- He is sublime! He and He alone is sublime. He has no partner."

Then Šebli fell into a swoon and began to twitch like someone bitten by a snake. Finally, he was carried to his home."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"In Saraks I heard Shaikh Abu'l-Faḥr Moḥammad b. al-Ḥasan¹¹¹ who was the spiritual master of his age, say:

'One should not remember the past and one should not look forward to the future. It is the present moment that counts. And this is the nature of being God's bondsman.'

Then he said:

'The essence of being God's bondsman consists of two things. First, perfect need for God, He is exalted, and that is the foundation of being God's bondsman.

Instructive Points

Second, perfect allegiance to the Prophet's example, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and this allows no enjoyment and no comfort to the carnal soul."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I heard Abu 'Ali al-Faqih¹¹² say the following which he heard from spiritual masters:

'The man who doesn't see that he is more in need of the reward from almsgiving than the poor man is in need of alms, verily, his almsgiving will be null and void.'

Then Abu 'Ali al-Faqih said:

'I heard the following Tradition of the Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and it was accompanied by several chains of transmission going back to 'Abdollah b. 'Omar¹¹³:

"The right hand is better than the left, for the left hand is used in begging."

Then 'Abdollah b. 'Omar added:

"There are three hands: the hand of God, which is the highest, the hand of the bestower, which is in the middle, and the hand of the beggar, which is lowest.""

* * *

Our Shaikh, God sanctify his awesome soul, one day said:

"The Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, has declared:

'On the day of resurrection Sincerity and Polytheism will be brought forth and they will kneel before the Lord of Creation. God, mighty is His glory, will say to Sincerity: "Depart and enter Paradise with your followers."

And He will say to Polytheism: "Depart and enter Hell-fire with your companions.""

Then the Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, recited:

Asrār al-Towḥid

Those who come possessed of a virtuous deed shall receive something better in return, and they shall be safe from terror on that day.

But those who come with an evil deed, shall be thrown face first into the Fire. Shall you not be rewarded in accordance with your deeds?"¹¹⁴

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Otbi¹¹⁵ **said:**

'Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malek¹¹⁶ **went in to see Valid**¹¹⁷ **and conciliated him concerning something the caliph had heard about him. Valid was content with him.**

As Maslama was leaving, the caliph said: "Carry light in front of Maslama."

Maslama said: "Oh Comander of the Faithful, tonight, by Allah, I will walk in the bright light of your contentment.""

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sābet¹¹⁸ **has related:**

'A woman was eating a meal. A beggar approached her and asked for something. There was nothing left of her food but a single mouthful. This she gave to the beggar.

A lion came upon the woman. The lion seized her boy and ran off with him.

Then behold, the woman saw a man go after the lion. When he reached the lion, he took hold of its whiskers and pulled in opposite directions until he extracted the boy from the lion's mouth.

He then delivered the boy to his mother and said: "Here's one mouthful in return for another.""

* * *

One day our Shaikh said from the pulpit:

"The prophet David, peace be upon him, asked: 'Oh Lord God, how should I seek You in order to find You?'

And God, He is exalted, revealed to David: 'Oh chief of worshippers, oh goal of the devout, you have abandoned Me with the

Instructive Points

first step you took. And that is because you see the quest as coming from you and not from Me."

And then our Shaikh said:

"When you think you have found Him, that very instant you have lost Him. And when you think you have lost Him, then you have found Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Dā'ud al-Ṭā'ī¹¹⁹ said:

'One night I went to the graveyard and I heard someone say: "Oh woe is me! Have I not prayed and have I not fasted?"

And an answerer replied: "Yes, indeed, but when you were alone with your Lord, you did not watch Him attentively."

Then our Shaikh added:

"Whoever, in his innermost thoughts, is attentive to God, He is exalted, God will restrain his limbs from committing impure acts."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb¹²⁰, God be pleased with him, was questioned about the meaning of bowing during prayers. He replied:

'When a Muslim bows, he says in his heart: "Though I be decapitated, I shall not abandon my religion, nor cease to worship my Lord."

* * *

One day in the midst of his discourse our Shaikh said:

"A disciple asked his spiritual master to invoke a blessing on his behalf. The master replied: 'My son, voluntary submission to what has fallen to your lot in pre-eternity¹²¹, is better than opposing the moment."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"I heard the following from Bu 'Ali-ye Faqih¹²²:

Asrār al-Towhīd

'Rābe'a¹²³ was asked: *"How have you attained what you have attained?"*

She replied: "By constantly repeating this: 'I take refuge in You from anything that would distract me from You, and from any obstacle that would hold me back from You.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"In Āmol I heard Abu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb¹²⁴ give the following reply when questioned about:

*'Say He is God, the One.'*¹²⁵

He replied: *"Say" is an activity, "He" is an indication, and "God" is an expression. But the meaning of God's Oneness is beyond indication and expression."*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One day Loqmān-e Sarakṣi¹²⁶ remarked: *Thirty years ago the True Sultan conquered the city of my heart and since then no one else has dared exercise dominion over it and dwell therein."*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Ostād Abu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq¹²⁷ was questioned concerning the samā'¹²⁸. He replied:

"The samā' is the immediate Moment. Whoever is without the samā', does not possess a sense of hearing. And whoever has no sense of hearing, has no religion, for God, He is exalted, has declared:

*"Indeed, (the demons) have been excluded from hearing (the Qur'ān)."*¹²⁹

And He has declared:

Instructive Points

"(The infidels) said: 'If only we had listened and used our intelligence, we would not be dwellers in Hell-fire.'"¹³⁰

Thus, the samā' is a messenger from the Truth and an envoy from the Truth, who conveys the people of Truth through the Truth to the Truth. Whoever listens to the samā' through Truth, will attain the Truth, while those who listen according to their natural disposition, will be heretics."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"One day 'Āyeša-ye Şeddiqa¹³¹, God be pleased with her, came home after having attended a wedding. The Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, asked: "How was the wedding? Was it pleasant? Was there anyone on hand who recited a verse¹³² for you all?"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said the following:

"Because the samā' of the friends is in accordance with Truth, they are the ones who listen the best way. God, He is exalted, has ordered:

'Bear good news to My servants who listen to the Word and follow what is best in it.'¹³³

The samā' of each person has the character of his temporal being. Some men listen in terms of this world and some listen with desire. Others listen by way of love and others, still, in terms of union and separation.

All this is sin and iniquity on the part of the man who does it, for his temporal being is tainted with darkness.

And there is the man who listens with some degree of mystic insight.

Each person listens to the samā' in accordance with his own spiritual station.

The man whose samā' is correct, however, is he who listens by way of the Truth. Those are the persons whom the Lord has distinguished with His benevolent gifts.

*'God is benevolent toward His servants.'*¹³⁴

There is the servant who is merely one of God's possessions and there is the privileged servant of God. *Toward His servants'* refers to those with privilege.

Their capacity to listen comes from the Truth and is in accordance with the Truth.

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was asked: "Every *pir* first had a *pir* himself. Who was your *pir*?"

And *pirs* have made themselves weak and emaciated through self-mortification, whereas your neck is too big to fit in your shirt collar.

Furthermore, *pirs* have undertaken the pilgrimage to Mecca but you have not.

What is the cause of this?"

The Shaikh answered: "You ask who was my *pir*, since every *pir* was attached to another *pir*?"

*'This is what my Lord God has taught me.'*¹³⁵

As for your point that *pirs* have made themselves weak and emaciated through self-mortification, whereas my neck is such that it doesn't fit in my shirt collar -- I find it a wonder that my neck is contained within the seven heavens and the earth, in view of all that God has bestowed upon me.

As for your saying that *pirs* have made the journey to the Ḥejāz, while I have not, it is no great feat to travel and make a thousand *farsangs*¹³⁶ pass under your feet in order to visit a stone house.

The real man is the man who sits here and several times during one day and night the Well-appointed House¹³⁷ circumambulates above his head.

Look and you will see!"

They looked and everyone present saw.

Instructive Points

* * *

One day in Nishapur our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, went to a mourning ceremony. The masters of ceremonies came before the Shaikh and wished to announce him in accordance with their custom and recite his titles. When they beheld the Shaikh, they were at a loss, not knowing how to announce him. They asked the Shaikh's disciples: "What title should we apply to the Shaikh?"

The Shaikh saw the confused plight they were in. He said to them: "Go inside and announce: 'Make way for No One, the son of No One!'"

The masters of ceremonies went in and following the Shaikh's instructions, cried out: "Make way for No One, the son of No One!"

All the dignitaries raised their heads and beheld the Shaikh as he was entering.

A state of joy came over everyone and they wept.

* * *

One day in Nishapur our Shaikh was passing through a certain neighborhood. Sweepers were cleaning out the pit of a privy. They were carrying forth the filth in leather sacks and dropping it in a ditch. When the Sufis reached the spot, they shrank back upon themselves, held their noses and started to run off.

The Shaikh called to them, saying: "This filth is speaking to me through 'the tongue of reality'¹³⁸. It says: 'We are those delicious, fragrant foods for whose sake you threw away your silver and gold, and for whom you risked your very lives. You endured every hardship and affliction, such that it is impossible to recount – in order to obtain us.

We spent one night in your company and have taken on your color. Why should you run away from us and hold your noses? We are your interior color and aroma!"

When the Shaikh uttered these words, a cry rose up from the company. They wept profusely and ecstatic states were experienced.

* * *

It has been related that one night in Meyhana Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb put a lamp down in front of our Shaikh and then left. The Shaikh called out to him, saying: "Why doesn't this lamp have its full brightness tonight, as on other nights?"

Ḥasan replied: "I don't know."

The Shaikh said: "Take a close look at it."

Ḥasan took it to the lampmaker to be examined. When he came back, he said: "The stick used to clean the Sufis' lamps, has been placed inside this lamp's bowl."

The Shaikh exclaimed: "Remove this lamp from my presence!"

Ḥasan removed the lamp from the Shaikh's presence.

* * *

Ṭalḥa b. Yusof al-'Aṭṭār has related:

"I spent a certain time in attendance upon our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When I was about to depart, he said to me: 'When you return to Baghdad and they ask you whom you visited and what benefit you acquired, what will you answer? Will you say I beheld a face with a beard?'¹³⁹

I replied: 'Whatever the Shaikh commands.'

The Shaikh said: 'Recite the following verses to whoever understands Arabic:

*Khorasan, they say, has given birth to a fawn,
Whose beauty knows no rival anywhere.
Deny not the virtues of this fawn, I say.
For Khorasan is where the sun arises.*

And for whoever doesn't understand Arabic, recite these verses:

*The fresh green of Paradise and spring comes from you.
Mementoes valued in Paradise come from you.
From you come China's painted form and color.
From you all Iran receives a happy omen."*

Instructive Points

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the Shaikh's grandson, has related:

"Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur. One day he was going to Bošanqān¹⁴⁰ and KVāja Bu 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi¹⁴¹ was accompanying our Shaikh. Along the way our Shaikh went on repeating:

'Oh Lord God, make me one of those few.'

When they reached Bošanqān and had dismounted, KVāja Bu 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi asked the Shaikh: 'On the way here it often passed the Shaikh's blessed lips:

"Oh Lord God, make me one of those few.""

Our Shaikh replied: 'The Lord, *He is exalted*, says:

*"Few from among My servants are grateful."*¹⁴²

I would like to be among that group that expresses proper gratitude for His bounty."

* * *

KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ, the Shaikh's grandson, has also related:

"One day in our Shaikh's presence, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, the singer chanted these verses:

*'I wish to hide inside my love poem,
And kiss your lips each time you sing these verses.'*

The Shaikh asked the singer: 'Whose verses are these?'

He replied: "Omāra¹⁴³ composed them.'

The Shaikh rose to his feet and set off with the company of Sufis to visit 'Omāra's tomb."

* * *

KVāja Bu Bakr-e Mo'addeb¹⁴⁴ has related:

"One night our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking in a low voice with *Kaṭīb-e Kufi*. Then he turned toward me and said: 'Did you hear what I was saying?'

I replied: 'No, oh Shaikh.'

The Shaikh said: 'I was saying:

"Weakness is of two kinds: laxness in a matter, when success is possible, and earnest striving in its pursuit, when all is lost."

At the very moment that the Shaikh said these words, the singer chanted the verses:

*'Don't pour out wine for me clandestinely
When it's possible to drink quite openly.'*

* * *

During the time our Shaikh resided in Nishapur, someone brought a jug of water before him and said: "Blow on this jug for the sake of a sick person."

Our Shaikh blew on the jug but then took it from the man and drank it down. The man exclaimed: "Oh Shaikh, why did you do that?"

The Shaikh replied: "The air I blew into this jug is such that no man in the world but myself could drink this potion. Now, come back tomorrow and I will blow air into it that effects a cure."

* * *

One day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in the bathhouse. A darvish was waiting upon the Shaikh and while massaging his back, was collecting the dirt on the Shaikh's arm. Such is the practice of the bathhouse masseurs, so that the person may see that the masseur is doing his job.

While performing this service, he asked the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is manly generosity¹⁴⁵?"

Straightway our Shaikh replied: "That you don't place a man's dirt before his sight."

All the spiritual masters and religious leaders of Nishapur when they heard these words, agreed that no one ever said anything better than this on the subject.

Instructive Points

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said:

"I have written down¹⁴⁶ that whoever utters one thousand benedictions on Friday night on behalf of Moṣṭafa, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, will see the Prophet in a dream.

Once in the city of Marv I did this and I beheld Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, in a dream.

Fāṭema, the Splendid¹⁴⁷, *God be pleased with her*, was seated before him and Moṣṭafā, *peace be upon him*, had placed his blessed hand on her auspicious head.

When I wished to advance towards the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, he exclaimed:

'Stop there! Verily, she is the Mistress of all the women in the world!'"

* * *

During the time our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was residing in Nishapur, there was one year when people were discussing what the astrologers said and their predictions. All at once it was current on the tongues of both the common people and the elite that: "This year such-and-such is going to happen."

One day our Shaikh was speaking before an assembly and many people were present, as was usual at his assemblies. All Nishapur's men of distinction and religious leaders were there. At the end of his assembly our Shaikh said: "Today I am going to speak to you about astrology."

All the people listened to the Shaikh with keen interest, wondering what he would say.

The Shaikh said: "Oh people, this year whatever God wishes shall happen, just as last year everything that happened was what God, *He is exalted*, wished.

God's blessings be upon Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all!"

And the Shaikh drew his hand over his face and brought the assembly to a close.

A shout rose up from the audience.

* * *

One day a person stood up during our Shaikh's assembly and said: "Oh Shaikh, invoke a blessing on my behalf."

The Shaikh replied:

"Justice, you say, has disappeared from the world.
The crime is his but I must seek forgiveness!"

These verses often passed the Shaikh's blessed lips.

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"If what they have related concerning the Commander of the True Believers, 'Ali, *God be pleased with him*, is sound, that he would pronounce five *takbirs*¹⁴⁸ over a corpse during the funeral prayers, only the first four were for the corpse.

The fifth *takbir* was for all mankind."

* * *

One day during the assembly of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a man rose to his feet and asked those present to give him something, saying: "I am a poor man."

Our Shaikh remarked: "That is not how you should say it. You should say: 'I am a beggar.'"

Indeed, poverty is one of the mysteries of God -- *His majesty is exalted!*"

* * *

During the period that our Shaikh was residing in Nishapur, one day he was holding an assembly in the *kānaqāh* and a little girl who was an 'Alavi¹⁴⁹, came before him. And this little girl was destitute. The girl's mother and father would beg from people.

Our Shaikh sat the girl down in front of him and said: "This female is one of our Prophet's offspring and you maintain a claim of friendship with him. When benedictions are pronounced on his behalf, you raise your voices loud and clear. Now give proof of that claim which you make concerning her ancestor. Give generously to this child of his and to his offspring and descendants."

Instructive Points

Then the Shaikh removed his robe and gave it to the girl and all those who were present at the gathering, followed his example.

Thus, the little girl obtained many things, for the gathering was large and most of the people were notables.

* * *

KVāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"During the period that our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, resided in Nishapur, the imams and spiritual masters of that day and age would continually come to visit him -- people like Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, Ostād Esmā'il-e Šābuni and Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri¹⁵⁰, *God sanctify their souls* -- and other men of distinction as well. They would have discussions together and ask one another questions.

One day this group was with our Shaikh and a discussion was taking place. Our Shaikh was speaking. They were asking our Shaikh questions and our Shaikh was answering. In the midst of his discourse the Shaikh recited these verses:

'Oh friend, I don't neglect you for one moment.
I have my spies right there where you reside.'

Then the Shaikh turned to those present and asked: 'Where does the sense of these verses occur in the Qor'ān?'

They thought for some time and looked at one another. But nothing came to them. Then they said: 'Let the Shaikh inform us.'

The Shaikh replied: 'Should I give the answer?'

They said yes and our Shaikh answered: 'The Lord has declared:

*"Do they imagine We do not hear their secrets and confidential talk? Oh yes! Our envoys, who are in their midst, record everything."*¹⁵¹

They were all amazed and remarked: 'What occurs and appears to the Shaikh, appears to no one else.'

* * *

Hasan-e Mo'addeb, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"One day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was speaking before an assembly in Nishapur. When he brought the assembly to a close, I went and stood before him. It was my custom, once all the people had left, to stand before the Shaikh and await his instructions. The Shaikh said:

'Oh Hasan, go out into the city and look for the man who, of all the city's inhabitants, is most hostile to me and most disapproves of "this affair"¹⁵². Go before him and say: "The darvishes are destitute and they have nothing to eat. They must be given assistance."

I left the Shaikh and went out of the *kānaqāh* and in my mind reviewed the whole city. I could think of no one more full of disapproval than 'Ali-ye Şandali¹⁵³. But I said: 'Perhaps this thought is not correct.'

Once more in my mind I passed the whole city under review and again my thought returned to him. But again I rejected the idea. For a third time I sent my thought around every part of the city and in my mind I scrutinized every corner. Again my attention fixed on him.

When this thought was borne out, I realized it was the truth.

I went to the *kānaqāh* of 'Ali-ye Şandali. He was seated reading a book and his students were in attendance upon him. I greeted him with 'salaam'. He returned my greeting with haughtiness, as was his custom, and said: 'Is there something you want?'

I replied: 'The Shaikh sends his greetings and says there are no resources and the darvishes must be given assistance.'

'Ali-ye Şandali was a man given to terse wit and mockery. He remarked: 'Now then, such an important matter! A religious duty! And I thought you had come to ask me a question. Be off, friend! I have more important things to do than this. Do you think I'd give anything to you Sufis who¹⁵⁴... and recite verses like this:

You're drunk and gaily dressed in the bazaar.

Have you no fear, oh friend, you may get caught?'

I departed and returned to the Shaikh but didn't want to tell the Shaikh what had happened. I said: 'He says he has nothing to give for the moment but will keep you in mind.'

Instructive Points

The Shaikh replied: 'There must be no deception. You must tell everything just as it took place.'

I related truthfully all that had happened. Our Shaikh said: 'You must return to him once more and tell him: "Adorned with the ornaments of this world and drunk and intoxicated with love of the world, are you not afraid that tomorrow at the bazaar of the Resurrection you will be caught on the Narrow Road¹⁵⁵? For the Lord says:

'Guide us along the straight road.'"¹⁵⁶

I set off and went before 'Ali-ye Şandali and gave him the Shaikh's message. He lowered his head and thought for some time. Then he said: 'Go to so-and-so the baker¹⁵⁷ and take one hundred silver dinars from him. As for you Sufis who are able to interpret the song in this manner, I have no quarrel with you. No one will get the upper hand over you!

But see that you don't make a habit of this and don't come back here again."

* * *

It has been related that one day in the *kānaqāh* in Nishapur our Shaikh had sat down at the table-cloth with the group of Sufis and they were eating a meal.

During the meal *K^vāja* Imam Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni¹⁵⁸ entered and greeted the Shaikh with "salaam". The Shaikh, however, did not return his greeting or pay any attention to him. *K^vāja* Imam Bu Moḥammad was put to shame and feeling vexed, sat down.

When they had finished eating and the table-cloth was removed and they had washed their hands, the Shaikh rose to his feet and returned Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni's "salaam". Then the Shaikh said: "'Salaam' is one of the names¹⁵⁹ of God, *His majesty is exalted*, and I do not hold it permissible to utter His name while my mouth is contaminated."

Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni felt joy well up in his heart and said: "No one possesses such proper usages pertaining to divine law and the mystic path, as does the Shaikh!"

All the spiritual masters and Sufis who were present, profited from these words of the Shaikh.

And this is why the Sufis do not say "salaam" when they go somewhere where a group is busy eating. Only when those eating have finished and have washed their hands, do the Sufis say "salaam".

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had a very distinguished sister, a woman whom the Shaikh's children called 'Amma¹⁶⁰ and this is how she was known in Meyhana. She led a life of extreme modesty and renunciation, such that she would only leave the house, if it were absolutely necessary.

Whenever, out of necessity, she did go outside, she had a *čādor*¹⁶¹ and boots and a suit of clothes which she kept behind the door in a place built just for that. She would take off the robe she wore in the house, and put it behind the door and put on the other robe, as well as the *čādor* and the boots. Then she went outside.

When she came in again, she took off the robe, the *čādor* and the boots in the same place and left them there and would not bring them inside, lest dust from the street and the road that settled on them enter her house.

And since the glance of strangers¹⁶² had fallen on this *čādor*, boots and robe, she did not want her glance to fall upon this clothing inside her house.

Every time our Shaikh came to visit her and then left, 'Amma would wash the house, saying: "The Shaikh walked in my house with the shoes he had on in the street."

.....

One day when our Shaikh was visiting her and had been talking, 'Amma said: "Oh Shaikh, these words of yours are an ingot of gold!"

The Shaikh replied: "Our words may be an ingot of gold, but your silence is an unpierced pearl!"

.....

Now there was a small opening between 'Amma's cell of seclusion and the Shaikh's cell, so that she was constantly watching the

Instructive Points

Shaikh in private and talking to him. And if she had a question or something occurred to her, she would ask the Shaikh about it.

One day our Shaikh was seated in his cell of seclusion and Keẓr¹⁶³, *peace be upon him*, had come to visit him. The two of them had sat down alone in the cell of seclusion and were talking.

'Amma came to the hole. She knew through her clairvoyance and miraculous power that this was Keẓr who was speaking with the Shaikh.

Secretly she watched everything they did. Keẓr twice drank water from the Shaikh's pitcher which was placed before them. When Keẓr rose to depart, our Shaikh got up as well and followed after him.

When they had gone out, 'Amma immediately came forth on-to the roof and entered the Shaikh's cell of seclusion. For the sake of blessings she drank water from our Shaikh's pitcher -- from the very spot Keẓr had taken a drink -- and then she left.

That very moment the Shaikh came back to his cell of seclusion and through his clairvoyance and miraculous power he was aware of everything that 'Amma had done. However, he said nothing to 'Amma.

He called his servant and had the opening in the cell of seclusion securely blocked up, so that thereafter 'Amma could not look from her cell of seclusion into that of our Shaikh's.

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said:

"A person beheld Paradise in a dream and there was a banquet table and a group of people seated around it. He was about to join them as well but someone came and took hold of his arm, saying: 'This is not your place! This table is for the people who had a single shirt, whereas you possess two of them. You cannot sit with them.'"

And our Shaikh added:

"Now matters have reached the point where people sew themselves a blue patched frock. When they put it on, they think all the necessary work has been completed.

They stand alongside the vat of indigo and say: 'Dip it in the vat once more, so it becomes darker blue.'

Indeed, they imagine the Sufi is this patched frock and they give their entire attention to it. They remain at the level of orna-

menting and decorating it and have made this their idol and object of worship."

The day the Shaikh uttered these words, he was sitting on a raised platform wearing a *faraji* which had been sewn for him from *fuṭa* cloth¹⁶⁴. While he was discoursing, he said:

"Now I have been dressed in a patched frock after having lived seventy-seven years in the present age. I have endured hardships and afflictions on this path and have extended my nocturnal vigils through the day. Only after this have I been dressed in the patched frock.

Nowadays anyone easily sews together a patched frock and puts it on."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"God says: 'We have declared to everyone:

"Say, there is no god but Allah!"

But to you, oh Moḥammad, We say:

*"Know that there is no god but Allah!"*¹⁶⁵

That is, know and see that there is only One."

Then someone from Transoxania who was present, recited this Qor'ānic verse:

*"...whose fuel is men and stones."*¹⁶⁶

The Shaikh, who spoke very little about the Qor'ānic verses to do with punishment, remarked: "Since stones and men have the same value for You, heat Hell with stones and don't burn these poor wretches."

* * *

It has been related that someone set out from Baghdad and came to Meyhana to see our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He asked our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, why did God, *He is sub-*

Instructive Points

lime and exalted, create mankind? Did He have need of creating them?"

Our Shaikh replied: "No, but He created them for three reasons. First, His power was so great, spectators were necessary. Second, His bounty was so great, someone to enjoy it was necessary. And third, since His mercy was great, a sinner was necessary."

* * *

One time a darvish was sweeping the *kānaqāh* in the Shaikh's presence. The Shaikh said: "Oh my brother, be like a pit in front of the broom. Don't be like a mountain behind the broom."

* * *

One day our Shaikh with a group of Sufis came to the gate of a mill. He reined in his horse and stopped there a while. Then he said:

"Do you know what this mill is saying? It says: 'Sufism consists in doing what I do. You receive the coarse and give back the refined and circumambulate yourself. You journey within yourself, in order to eliminate from yourself what is not necessary -- not within the world, in order to make land pass under your feet.'"

The whole company experienced a flush of joy.

* * *

It has been related that Ostād Bu Şāleh, our Shaikh's Qor'ānic reciter, fell ill and was confined to bed. Our Shaikh summoned Kvāja Abu Bakr-e Mo'addeb who was the tutor in letters of the Shaikh's children, and ordered him: "Bring pen and ink and a piece of paper, that I may dictate a charm¹⁶⁷ for Bu Şāleh."

Kvāja Abu Bakr brought the paper, the inkwell and the pen and our Shaikh ordered: "Write:

The Houris joined ranks to gaze at my beloved.
Rezvān¹⁶⁸, out of amazement, clapped his hands.
But when upon her cheek she fixed a black mole,
Abdāls¹⁶⁹ were struck with fear and clutched the Qor'ān."

K^vāja Bu Bakr-e Mo'addeb wrote this and it was brought to Ostād Bu Šāleh and tied onto his person. Immediately signs of health appeared. That day he went outside and his sickness vanished.

* * *

It has been related that one of the spiritual masters during the time of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had gone with a group of Sufis on a military expedition in the land of Rum¹⁷⁰. One day he was out riding in that Realm of Warfare¹⁷¹ and met Eblis¹⁷². He said to Eblis: "Oh cursed one, what are you doing here? Your heart is not concerned with this present company of men¹⁷³."

Eblis replied: "I've landed here through no choice of my own."
He asked: "How is that?"

Eblis replied: "I was passing by Meyhana and entered the town. Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr had left the mosque and was returning home. On the way he sneezed and his sneeze cast me here!"

* * *

And our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was questioned about someone: "Oh Shaikh, there is a certain person who performs prayers during the day and steals at night."

Our Shaikh replied: "It would not be strange if the grace from his prayers during the day will keep him from stealing at night."

* * *

One of the mystic guides said to our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, I beheld you in a dream. I asked: 'What must we do, oh Shaikh, to escape from the concupiscent soul?'"

Our Shaikh replied: "There is nothing you must do, for the reason that everything has been done and seen to. Nothing can be done over again."

If God has predetermined something, He will give success, and if He has not predetermined it, don't be vexed, for it will not make a single atom of difference.

Instructive Points

If He has predetermined it, He will move you to seek Him. In truth, it is He Who seeks you. Only afterwards does He move you to seek Him as well."

* * *

Our Shaikh has related:

"There is a Tradition that a group of people went before the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, and wished to know what it is to be a darvish.

The Prophet called one from among them and said: 'Do you have five dirhems?'

The man replied: 'Yes, I do.'

The Prophet said to him: 'You are not a darvish.'

He called another man and said: 'Do you have five dirhems?'

The man replied: 'I do not.'

The Prophet asked: 'Do you have goods worth five dirhems?'

He replied: 'Yes, I do.'

The Prophet said: 'You are not a darvish.'

He called another man and said: 'Do you have five dirhems?'

He replied: 'No.'

The Prophet asked: 'Do you have goods worth five dirhems?'

The man replied: 'No.'

He asked: 'Can you raise five dirhems due to your standing?'

The man replied: 'Yes.'

The Prophet said: 'You are not a darvish either.'

He called someone else and said: 'Do you have five dirhems?'

The man replied: 'No, I do not.'

He asked: 'Can you raise five dirhems due to your standing?'

The man replied: 'No.'

The Prophet asked: 'Can you earn five dirhems working?'

He replied: 'I could.'

The Prophet said: 'Rise and depart! You are no darvish.'

And he called another man and asked: 'Is five dirhems available to you in any of these ways?'

He replied: 'No.'

The Prophet asked: 'If five dirhems turned up, would you say it was yours and consider you had a share in it?'

He answered: 'I would, to say the least.'

The Prophet said: 'Rise and depart! You are no darvish.'

He called another man and asked: 'Does any of what I have said apply to you?'

The man replied: 'No.'

The Prophet asked: 'If five dirhems turned up, would you think you had the right to dispose of them?'

'No, oh Prophet of God.'

The Prophet asked: 'What would you do with them?'

He said: 'The sum would be at the disposal of the darvishes. I would have no share of it at all.'

The Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, declared: 'You are truly a darvish. This is what a darvish is like. He does not have a "he".'

When the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, said this, all the others began to weep. They asked: 'Oh Prophet of God, everyone calls us darvishes but being a darvish is, in fact, what you have pointed out. What, then, are we?'

The Prophet declared: 'He is a darvish. You are all parasites upon him!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"One time a wasp came upon an ant and observed him carrying home a grain of wheat. The ant was struggling with it and dragging it along with great effort. People were walking on the ant and causing him harm and injury.

The wasp said to the ant: 'What is this hardship and suffering you've taken upon yourself for a grain of wheat? You endure this much humiliation for one paltry grain!

Come see how easily I eat and what delicious fare I partake of, without all this hardship. I dine on what is finest and best -- just as I please.

Then he took the ant with him to a butcher shop, a place where fine, fatty meat was hung out.

The wasp arrived out of the air and alighted on a piece of meat. He ate his fill of the choicest part and collected some meat to take with him.

However, the butcher appeared and struck the wasp with a knife. Having thus cut the wasp in two, he whisked him aside and the wasp fell on the ground.

Now the ant came and taking hold of the wasp's foot, dragged him away. The ant remarked: 'Whoever alights anywhere he pleases, will be dragged away in a manner that doesn't please him.'"

* * *

Kṽāja Maṣʿad¹⁷⁴, the son of Kṽāja Imam Moḥaffar-e Ḥamdān-e Nowqāni¹⁷⁵, has said:

"One day Shaikh Bu Saʿid-e Bu'l-Keyr was seated with my father and they were talking. My father said to Shaikh Bu Saʿid: 'I will not call you a Sufi, nor will I call you a darvish, but I will call you a perfected knower of God¹⁷⁶.'

Shaikh Bu Saʿid replied: 'May it be as he says!'"

.....

And Kṽāja Maṣʿad has related:

"My grandmother was Ṣāyena. She took my mother, Rāḥati, before Shaikh Bu Saʿid in Nishapur. My mother was twelve or thirteen years old and her marriage had not yet been arranged with my father.

The Shaikh asked my mother: 'What is your name?'

She replied: 'Rāḥati.'

He remarked: 'May it prove a blessing! Now you must give a banquet for the Sufis.'

She replied: 'I don't possess anything.'

The Shaikh said: 'Then beg.'

She answered: 'I will do just that.'

Then that very instant she said to the Shaikh: 'I am going to prepare a banquet for the Sufis. Give me something!'

The Shaikh gave her both his shirt and his mantle. These she took and went to the Mikālīs' Caravanserai¹⁷⁷. A mother and a daughter were there. Rāḥati said: 'Shaikh Bu Saʿid asked me to give a banquet for the Sufis. I said that I owned nothing but he told me to beg. I then begged from him and he gave me this shirt and mantle. Now, how much will you buy them for?'

The daughter rose to her feet and went into a room. She brought out a pair of bracelets worth sixty dinars. Placing them before me, she took the mantle. The mother brought a necklace which was also worth sixty dinars, and took the shirt. They both placed these tokens of gratitude before me.

When we had sat there for a while, I said: 'This clothing of the Shaikh's is speaking to me. Do you hear what it says?'

They replied: 'No, we don't.'

I said: 'It says: "I cannot accommodate myself to anything. Either I stay here or let someone else stay here."'

Do you think you are a match for this?'

They replied that they were not and I said: 'We must find a solution.'

They went into the room and brought out the mantle and the shirt. Then they kissed them and placing them before me, said: 'You deserve this more than we do, but keep the bracelets and the necklace.'

I rose to my feet and returned to the Shaikh. Placing the mantle and shirt and the bracelets and the necklace before him, I said: 'Arrange a banquet for the Sufis, as you see fit.'

The Shaikh ordered the banquet to be prepared and the Shaikh's mantle and shirt were cut into pieces.

.....

After this, it so happened that Šāyena went to Nowqān and visited KṼāja Moẓaffar and they talked together. Šāyena spoke on the subject of 'annihilation' and KṼāja Moẓaffar spoke of 'permanence'. KṼāja Moẓaffar was greatly pleased by Šāyena's words and said: 'Whoever is in agreement with you, is in agreement with the Real, and whoever opposes you, opposes the Real.'

Šāyena replied: 'A gift is required in thanks for what you have said, but I don't have anything. I place Rāḥati at your disposal.'

KṼāja Moẓaffar replied: 'I am not concerned with such matters.'

And during the ten years that his wife still lived, as well as for another ten years after she had gone over to the mercy of God, *He is exalted*, KṼāja Moẓaffar did not have need of Rāḥati.

Twenty years later, however, he sought Rāḥati in marriage and she gave birth to KṼāja Maṣ'ad, due to the blessings of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's concern and the soundness of his glance – *God sanctify their souls!*"

* * *

Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿĀref al-Nowqāni¹⁷⁸ has related:

"In Nishapur I went forth with Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, to the cemetery of Hira to attend the funeral of a dear person. When the Shaikh came to the tomb of Shaikh Aḥmad-e Ṭāyarāni¹⁷⁹, the Shaikh's horse stopped. The

Instructive Points

Shaikh fixed his gaze on Shaikh Aḥmad-e Ṭāyarāni's tomb and stared intently at the tomb for some time.

Then the Shaikh drove on his horse and said:

'This Shaikh Aḥmad al-Ṭāyarāni is speaking to me.

I stopped in order to listen to what he was saying."

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"I beheld myself in a dream with Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq and Ostād Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri¹⁸⁰. The three of us were seated together when a heavenly voice declared: 'Arise, each of you, and offer up a pilgrim's sacrifice¹⁸¹.'

Bu 'Ali and myself rose to our feet and performed the sacrifice. Ostād Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri made every effort and he wept and he wailed but he was unable to get up and perform the sacrifice.

Had he been able to carry this out, there would not have been anyone like him throughout the world."

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was out walking. A serpent of enormous size came forth and by way of seeking favor, rubbed itself on the Shaikh's feet. A man who was with our Shaikh, was astonished at the sight of this.

Our Shaikh said to the man: "This serpent has come to give me his greetings. Would you like the same thing to happen to you?"

The man replied: "Yes, I would."

Our Shaikh said: "This will never happen to you, because you would like it to happen."

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was sitting by the tomb of Shaikh Bāyazid-e Baṣṭāmi¹⁸² -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* Pointing at Shaikh Bāyazid's tomb, he said:

"This shaikh has declared:

'God, He is exalted, has scattered the footsteps of the Friends over the earth and what do these envious ones say?' 183

That is, they are not pleased with this."

* * *

One time Ahmad-e Bu Leys came to visit our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When he departed, our Shaikh sent someone to accompany him. When this man returned, the Shaikh asked him: "What did Ahmad say along the way?"

He replied: "He talked about the gifts granted by God -- *He is exalted!*"

The Shaikh said: "Which gifts did he talk about? These gifts are of different degrees. Did he talk about the bounty He has bestowed on me, or that which He has bestowed upon you, or that which He has bestowed upon him?"

What He has bestowed upon me is the greatest and highest of gifts, whereas what He has given you is of the middle degree and comes to an end."

.....

Then the Shaikh said:

"There was a spiritual guide who did not cut his hair. In the end a scorpion made its nest on his head and brought forth children."

.....

And it has been related that when someone came to visit our Shaikh, he would say:

"Come in and let me recite the praises of my Lord God to you! Are there such things as this and that in your city... ? Which gift shall I give thanks for? Really, I sit here in impotence with my back propped up."

* * *

It has been related that on his way from Marv to Bāvard Kvāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz¹⁸⁴ had stopped in Meyhana. Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was sitting in the mosque

Instructive Points

with KVāja Aḥmad-e Naṣr and several spiritual masters and they were talking together.

During their talk, the conversation turned to a certain successful man of the world. KVāja 'Ali-ye Kabbāz remarked: "Yes, there is a man of generosity!"

Our Shaikh said: "Honesty is required here. This is not called generosity. This is called egotism. The fact that he spends his wealth is called egotism, not generosity.

The generous man is he whose thought is involved with nothing apart from the Lord."

* * *

It has been related that one day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was sitting in the mosque and there was a piece of straw on his blessed beard. A darvish reaching out his hand, removed the straw and threw it away in the mosque.

The Shaikh turned toward him and said: "Oh my brother, are you not afraid that because of what you did, God, *He is glorious and exalted*, may cause the seven heavens to crash down on the earth and destroy it? For God, *He is sanctified and exalted*, has ordered this precious face of mine to place itself on the ground in the mosque:

*'Prostrate yourself and draw near!'*¹⁸⁵

You would not allow this piece of straw in my beard. How could you allow yourself to throw it away inside the house of God?"

* * *

It has been related that during the period our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, he sent a message to Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri¹⁸⁶, to the effect that: "I hear that you make use of pious endowments¹⁸⁷ for your own purposes. You must not do that anymore."

Ostād Imam replied: "These endowments are in my hands but not in my heart."

Our Shaikh sent back the answer: "I would like your hands to be even as your heart."

* * *

Ostād ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, who was the Qor’ānic reciter of our Shaikh Abu Sa’id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has related:

"During the period our Shaikh was residing in Nishapur, a person came before him and greeting him with 'salaam', said: 'I am a stranger and since my arrival in the city, everyone has been talking about you -- that there is a man here who possesses visible miraculous powers. Now show me a miracle.'

Our Shaikh said: 'I was in Āmol visiting Shaikh Bu'l-‘Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb¹⁸⁸ when someone -- just as is the case with you -- came to see him and made this same request and asked him for a miracle. Shaikh Bu'l-‘Abbās replied: "But don't you see! What is it that is not a miracle? What you behold here is the son of a butcher who learned the butcher's trade from his father.

Something was revealed to him and he was snatched away. He was driven on to Baghdad. God took him to the spiritual master, Šebli. Then God drove him from Baghdad to Mecca, and from Mecca to Medina, and from Medina to Jerusalem.

God revealed Keẓr¹⁸⁹ to him and moved Keẓr in his heart to accept him and "companionship"¹⁹⁰ occurred between them.

Then He brought me back here and caused a world of people to turn their attentions towards me.

People quit the taverns and were freed from iniquities. They repented of their former lives and gave away their wealth. From all quarters of the world those who had experienced inner burning came and sought Him through me. What greater miracle is there than this?"

The man said: "Oh Shaikh, I want to see a miracle for myself, right now."

Bu'l-‘Abbās replied: "Look well! Is it not a divine gift that the son of a goat butcher sits in the place of honor among the great and he does not fall to the ground, nor do these walls collapse on him, nor does this house crash down on his head?

He has dominion without property or wealth. Though he is devoid of means and does no work, he eats his daily food and feeds men at large.

Is all this not a miracle?"

Thereupon our Shaikh said: 'Oh generous fellow, I'm having the same problem with you as Bu'l-‘Abbās had with the person who posed that question.'

Instructive Points

The man replied: 'Oh Shaikh, I'm asking you for a miracle and you go on talking about Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās.'

The Shaikh said: 'Whoever belongs entirely to the Bountiful (*Karim*), all his acts are miracles (*karāmāt*).'

Then he smiled and recited:

'Each wind that blows from Bokhara bears musk,
A jasmine's scent, or perfume of the rose.
But every man or woman on whom it blows,
Says: "This wind must be arriving from Kotan¹⁹¹!"
But no! No wind so sweet blows from Kotan.
This wind arrives from my beloved's breast.
To catch sight of you each night I turn toward Yemen.
For you are Canopus, rising over Yemen.
My idol, I strive to conceal your name from men,
To keep your name out of the multitude's mouth.
But though I would or not, with whomever I speak,
Your name is the first word to appear in my mouth.'

Then the Shaikh said: 'When God purifies the servant and renders him specially fit for Himself, then the servant's acts and omissions, his bodily frame and his spiritual state, are all miracles -- *the blessings of Allah be upon Moḥammad and upon his family, one and all.*'"

BOOK TWO

CHAPTER THREE

Containing some of the Shaikh's instructive sayings, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and a small portion of his letters, as well as verses that passed his blessed lips – as many as I found to be sound. And their authenticity has been verified to the utmost of my ability.

* * *

Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id b. Abi'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "What counts is the heart's vision, not the tongue's discourse."

* * *

"But he who fears to stand before his Lord and restrains his soul¹ from desire..."²

Until you kill the carnal soul, you will not escape from it."

* * *

"It is not sufficient for you to say: 'I proclaim: *"There is no god but Allah"*. Now I am a Muslim.'

*'Most of them do not believe in Allah without worshipping other gods besides Him.'*³

Our Shaikh then said (in explaining the verse): 'They profess faith with their tongue, but most of them have polytheism in their heart.'

God, *mighty is His glory*, says: 'I will not forgive polytheism.'

*Verily, Allah does not forgive those who serve other gods besides Him, but He forgives whom He will for any other sin.'*⁴

I forgive whomever I wish for any sin other than polytheism and your seven bodily parts⁵ are filled with polytheism and doubt. You must remove these forms of polytheism from your hearts so that you may attain peace.

* * *

"And he who does not believe in Ṭāḡut ⁶ but has faith in God... '7

Everyone's Ṭāḡut is his Self. Until you renounce belief in your Self, you will not become a believer in God.

Every person's Ṭāḡut is his Self and the Self keeps you apart from God. It says: 'So-and-so has treated you badly, while someone else has been good to you.'

It points wholly towards mankind and this is sheer polytheism.

Nothing depends on mankind; everything depends on Him. This is what you must realize and what you must proclaim. And when you have proclaimed this, you must stand by it and persevere.

Perseverance means that when you have said one, you never again say two. And mankind and God are two."

* * *

"Someone came before the Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and said: 'Tell me something concerning Muslim faith, which is a fundamental principle I can count on.'

The Prophet replied:

'Proclaim: "I believe in God." And then persevere!'

And in this Qor'ānic verse God declares:

'Verily, they who proclaim: "Our Lord is Allah", and then persevere... '8

The meaning of this verse is: 'Don't dodge like a fox.'

That is, don't swerve like a fox and turn up every moment in a different place. That is not true faith. Embrace the faith by proclaiming: 'Allah, Allah!'

Book Two, Chapter Three

And in this remain steadfast. Being steadfast means that once you have said God, mention of a creature is no longer on your tongue, nor do you admit a creature to your heart. For creatures are like what does not exist. How long can there be talk of them?

Whatever you see and speak of, may it be something that is and never becomes non-existent. And love someone who does not come to an end when you end, but persists, so that you too may be a being that never ends."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "To quarrel is to be an infidel, regarding anything as coming from other than God is polytheism, and to be joyful is a religious duty."

* * *

They said to our Shaikh: "A man repented of his former life but then broke his resolve."

Our Shaikh replied: "If repentance had broken the man, he would never have broken his repentance." ⁹

* * *

Our Shaikh always used to say: "You are not necessary¹⁰."

He would also say: "Don't seek a beloved without flaws, for you will not find one."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A thousand friends are few but one enemy is many."

* * *

One day our Shaikh said in intimate prayer: "Oh Lord God, show forgiveness, for that is the good way. And don't interrogate, for that has its faults."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "Are the men of God in the mosque?"

He replied: "They are also in the tavern."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "I have attained what I have attained by nocturnal vigils, by my breast's being empty of protest, and by never refusing to give away my possessions."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "What is it to be a Sufi?"

He replied: "Whatever you have in your head, you put aside. Whatever you have in your hand, you give away. And you do not flee from whatever befalls you."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Whatever distracts you from God, is evil for you.

Whatever occupies you apart from God is a misfortune for you, and associating with it is reprehensible."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "During one day and night you take thirty thousand breaths. Every breath not taken in the Truth, is rotten like a corpse before which an angel holds his nose."

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"Your moment is between two breaths.

Your moment is your breath between two breaths. One is gone and the other has not yet come."

Then he said: "Yesterday is gone but where is tomorrow? The day is today.

The moment is a cutting sword."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Sufism is two things: looking in one direction and living one way."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Allah and nothing more! Everything besides Him is vanity. Let talking cease!"

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"Whoever's setting out to reach Us is sound, his claim is incumbent upon Us.

The more firm the intention of whoever sets out on this road, so much brighter will the light of this road shine upon him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Recollection¹¹ is forgetting everything besides Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has often said:

"Be a pure Jew, otherwise don't trifle with the Torah."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The soul's peace lies entirely in submission. Its affliction is in planning."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A *pir* was asked: 'Invoke a blessing on our behalf.'

He replied:

'Acquiescing in what has fallen to your lot in pre-eternity, is better than opposing the moment.

*The whole good lies in what our Creator has chosen.
Choosing other than that is evil and misfortune."*

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "It is this and nothing more -- and it can be written on a finger nail:

Sacrifice the Self, otherwise don't be occupied with the foolish talk of the Sufis!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Practice of Islam consists of bowing the neck to the pre-eternal decrees.

Islam means that your Self dies away from you."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "When God's servant turns his glance away during prayer, the Lord, *He is sublime and exalted*, says: 'Don't look away! What are you looking at? I am better for you than that. Look at me!'

When he looks away a second time, God says: 'Don't look away! What can you look at mightier and more generous than Me?'

When he looks away a third time, the Lord says: 'Be gone! Go join what you are looking at!'

Do you know what my beloved said today?
Behold no one but us, keep your vision fixed!"

* * *

One day our Shaikh said before a group of his devotees: "As God is my witness -- and this is the equivalent of seventy oaths -- whomever God directs to set out on the road to Mecca, that person has been deterred from the path of Truth."

* * *

The Shaikh said (verse):

"You must abbreviate all lengthy speech
And guard against the friend of bad influence.

The bad friend is he who proclaims two. Proclaiming two is disbelief and this is what you must be on guard against. This is your Self that says things to you and brings you into conflict with mankind.

'You must abbreviate all lengthy speech' means you are to say one and nothing more."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

*"Verily, the most noble of you in God's sight, are the most pious among you."*¹²

The most esteemed among you are those of you who are most abstinent. What is meant is abstinence from one's Self. And that is why when you have achieved abstinence from the Self, you have reached Him.

*'And this is the way of your Lord, the straight way.'*¹³

This is my way. Any other is wholly blindness.

This is not the way of those who fast, nor that of those who pray standing, nor that of the religious devotee, nor of him who prostrates himself, nor of him who bows in prayer.

This way is abstinence from one's Self. When a person does this, then he says:

'And this is the way of your Lord, the straight way.'

This is my way, if you wish to know what my way is."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sufism is a name attached to its object but when it reaches perfection, it is God."

He added: "Sufism is a name attached to its object. When it becomes perfected and reaches its end, nothing remains in its place but God."

* * *

One day a darvish stood in our Shaikh's presence respectfully, as one stands during the prayers. Our Shaikh said: "You are standing very nicely, as one stands during the prayers, but it were better yet, if 'you' were not present."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whatever does not belong to God is nothing, and whoever does not belong to God is a nobody."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Wherever your illusion of Self exists is Hell, and wherever you no longer exist is Paradise."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The veil between God's servant and God is not heaven and earth, nor the Throne and the Footstool¹⁴. Your self-conceit and your 'I' are the veil. Remove them, and you have reached God."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "From the four books of God, *He is exalted*, four sayings have been chosen to be put into practice.

From the Torah:

'He who is content is sated.'

From the Gospels:

'He who withdraws in isolation is secure.'

And from the Psalms of David:

'He who is silent is saved.'

And from the Qor'ān:

*'He who puts his trust in God, indeed, God shall suffice him!'*¹⁵

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Men have raised blisters on their bodies, stayed in one place and devoted themselves for years on end, in hope of a whiff of 'this affair'¹⁶."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "Oh Shaikh, where should we keep our hands during the prayers?"

The Shaikh replied: "Fix your hand on your heart and your heart on God – *mighty is His glory!*"

* * *

One day our Shaikh said: "All the horsemen of the mystic path, once they reached the street of Bāyazid¹⁷, drew in their reins. But tell Bāyazid: 'Come here and see what horsemanship is!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "When does God's servant become free from his own wants?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Whenever God releases him. This does not depend on the servant's effort but has to do with the Lord God's generosity, with His doing and His bestowal of success.

First, God brings forth in the servant a longing for 'this affair'. Then He opens the door of repentance before him. And then, He casts him into self-mortification, such that the servant exerts himself. For some time he takes pride in this effort of his. He has the illusion that he is advancing or that he is accomplishing something.

After a while he becomes incapable of this as well and he obtains no peace because he is (still) unclean and polluted. Then he realizes that he has undertaken these acts of devotion in self-conceit. He repents and realizes: 'This was due to the Lord's bestowal of success. This came from His generosity, not from my effort. Moreover, beholding my effort in this matter was polytheism.'

Once he is aware of this, peace enters his heart.

Then the door of certainty is opened before him. For some time he runs on, putting up with everything from each and everyone, suffering humiliations and experiencing hardships. Meanwhile, he knows with certainty Who is the cause of all this.

At this point doubt leaves his heart. Then a door of love is opened before him and for some time he displays himself in that love. During that love, egotism raises its head from among his fellow men and in that egotism he receives reproaches. The *Malāmati*¹⁸ is he who, out of love of God, does not fear whatever happens to him and does not think of it as reproach.

Self-conceit appears in him. He says: 'I love'. For some time he proceeds in this also. In this as well he does badly and experiences no peace. Having attained no rest, he realizes it is the Lord Who loves him and causes him to love the Lord, and he realizes that the Lord bestows this upon him. This depends entirely upon Him and upon His generosity, not upon our effort.

Once he has seen this, he experiences peace. Thereupon, the door of God's Oneness opens before him, so that he may see and know, and God makes him aware, so that he recognizes all matters are with God -- *mighty is His glory!*

'Verily, all things depend on the mercy of God.'

Book Two, Chapter Three

At this point, the servant realizes that all is He and all depends on Him and all is His. Likewise, all this is self-conceit which God has laid upon His creatures to make trial of them and to afflict them. It is an error which He makes current among them out of His despotic power, for God possesses the attribute of despotism.

The servant beholds God's attributes and realizes that He is the Lord. What was hearsay, becomes something he perceives. He now sees it directly and observes it in God's works.

Then the servant realizes completely that it is not fitting for him to say 'me', or 'mine'. In this station the servant experiences an impotence and his wants fall away from him. The servant becomes free and at peace.

Then the servant wants what He wants. The servant's will is gone and the servant is free from his own wants. He is at peace in the two worlds. He has found rest. All is He and you are nobody. Now you say: 'I am no one.' But should the least trifle be made to appear to you¹⁹, you would begin to shout.

First, there must be action and then knowledge, so that you realize that you know nothing and you are nobody. It is no easy matter to attain this realization. It doesn't come with teaching and instruction, nor can it be sewn on with a needle, or tied on with a thread. This is a gift from God and a question of whom He bestows it on and whom He causes to experience it.

God's instruction is required:

'This is what my Lord has taught me... 20'The Merciful has taught me the Qor'ān.'"²¹

And the Shaikh added: "An attraction on the part of God pulls toward the direct vision of essence. Then knowledge becomes sight, sight becomes unveiling, unveiling witnessing, and witnessing becomes being.

The word becomes muteness, life becomes death, direct expressions cease, indications are effaced, and hostilities disappear. Annihilation in God reaches perfection, permanence is established, hardship and distress pass away, and water and earth perish.

He remains Who has never ceased to exist, as He existed when time was not yet time.

'Say: Take thought! If the water you have were to sink into the earth, then who would give you running water?'" 22

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "God's creatures experience suffering because they seek achievements before the proper time."

* * *

The Shaikh has said: "In all circumstances God, *He is exalted*, subordinates His right to the rights of mankind. Out of nobility and generosity, He pardons and passes over deficiencies with regard to His right but in the case of mankind's rights He does not allow it, for mercy is characteristic of the True, whereas impotence and helplessness is characteristic of God's creatures."

Then the Shaikh recited these verses:

"Indeed, the noble behave like the king behaved.
He looked at the slave with the eye of munificence."

* * *

One day in the midst of his discourse the Shaikh turned to someone in his group and said: "All anxieties come from the Self. If you do not kill it, it will kill you. If you do not subdue it, it will subdue and conquer you."

* * *

One day our Shaikh said from the pulpit:

"Someone may ask you after I am gone: 'What was your shaikh's fundamental principle?'

Say there are four principles: the decision of the moment, intuition from the innermost heart, gifts from the invisible world, and the absolute sway of the True."

* * *

One day during an assembly our Shaikh was asked:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"Oh Shaikh, what is truthfulness and what is the nature of the path to God?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"Truthfulness is a deposit entrusted by God to His servants and the Self has no share in it, for truthfulness is the path to the True and God has denied a path unto Himself to those possessed of Self."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "If someone having progressed through the mystic stations, reaches the highest degree and becomes acquainted with the invisible world but has had no *pir* or teacher, nothing shall come of him. Moreover, every ecstatic state devoid of any self-mortification and knowledge contains more harm than benefit."

* * *

One day during a discourse our Shaikh said: "Sufism is splendor in the midst of humiliation, wealth in poverty, lordliness in slavery, satiety in hunger, being clothed in nakedness, freedom in servitude, life in death, and sweetness in the midst of bitterness.

Whoever enters on this path but does not proceed in that manner, shall each day go further astray."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A man must be occupied with two tasks. He must eliminate whatever holds him back from God, and bring comfort to the poor.

If he fulfills the mystic desire in this manner, he will reach the final goal. If not, there will be bewilderment. He will not succeed, neither in religion, nor in matters of the world."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "How many roads are there from the created realm to the True?"

According to one account, he replied: "There are more than a thousand."

And according to another account, he said: "There are as many roads to the True as there are atoms in existing things but no road is shorter or easier than the procuring of another Muslim's comfort."

I have chosen to travel this road and this is the one I recommend to everybody."

* * *

A darvish asked our Shaikh: "Where should I seek Him?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Where have you sought Him that you have not found Him?"

If you take a step in truthfulness along the path of seeking, you shall see Him in everything you look at."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The servant of God who is taken off to Hell, sees a light in the distance. He asks: 'What is that light?'"

He is told: 'It's the light of the *pir*, so-and-so.'

The servant says: 'I used to love that *pir* while I was in the world.'

The wind conveys what he said to the *pir's* ear. By way of intercession, that venerable person says a word in the Divine Presence, *He is sublime and exalted*, on behalf of this sinner.

The Lord God, *He is exalted*, frees him thanks to the intercession of the venerable *pir*."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "Why is it that He reveals some of the Friends but others He keeps hidden?"

Our Shaikh replied: "The one that God, *He is exalted*, loves, He conceals, whereas the one who loves God, *He is exalted*, God reveals."

* * *

They asked our Shaikh: "Who is a Sufi?"

Book Two, Chapter Three

He replied: "A Sufi is the man whose every act is aimed at pleasing God, with the result that every act of God pleases him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Those rich in this world enjoy the pleasures of this world, while those rich in the hereafter enjoy their sorrow."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "The spiritual masters of Transoxania²³ have said: 'Overweening joy is one of the stations of polytheism, whereas sorrow is one of the stations of true faith.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Sorrow is a fortress built by God for His servant as protection against afflictions."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Men of the world are the prey Eblis²⁴ has caught with the noose of desires, whereas men of the hereafter are the prey God has caught with the noose of sorrow."

God, He is exalted, has declared:

*'Do not exult, for God does not love the exultant.'*²⁵

And the Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, declared:

'Verily, God, He is exalted, loves all sorrowful hearts.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "When it occurs in someone's mind that a certain task is to be undertaken, he must tell God -- *He is exalted!* Then he must tell whoever appears in his mind from the invisible world."

He mustn't see himself as being actively involved in the matter."

* * *

Our Shaikh said to a darvish: "Whatever must be said in the midst of the Sufis, don't you say it, for it will not remain unsaid. And don't do whatever must not be done, for it will not remain undone."²⁶

* * *

I saw the following written in the hand of Kṽāja Abu'l-Barakāt-e Šeyk:

"I heard from Pir Bu Bakr-e Daruni, who heard it from Pir Bu'l-Hasan-e Bāruzi, who said he'd heard this Tradition from Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr, *God sanctify his awesome soul: The Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared:

"Whoever loves a people for their actions, will be gathered in their number and called to account along with them, even if he has not undertaken the actions they have undertaken."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Wealth is a much loved hardship, while poverty is a detested comfort."

Men of learning have all agreed that no one has spoken better or more concisely on the subject than this.

* * *

It has been related that whenever a child or grandchild was brought before the Shaikh at the hour of its birth, so that the Shaikh might pronounce the call to prayer in its ear, the Shaikh would put his mouth to the child's ear but instead of the call to prayer he would whisper: "You must devote yourself to 'this affair'²⁷."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Whoever looks upon God's creatures with a creature's eye, his quarrel with them will be long. But whoever looks upon creatures with the eye of the True, will experience peace with regard to them."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, said:

'Verily, the first of my community to knock at the gates of Paradise shall be the poor and the greater part of my community who dwell in Paradise are the weak.

As for the wicked of my community who will be conducted to Hell-fire, they are the funnels.'

He was asked: 'Oh Prophet of God, who are the funnels?'

The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, replied:

"Those who when they eat, are not sated, and when they gather goods, never have enough."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Whoever has not been trained by a teacher is worthless.

And every ecstatic state and 'moment' which does not come from knowledge and is not the result of ascetic discipline, even if it is exalted, will turn out to be more harm than benefit for him who experiences it. And though a man reaches the highest spiritual ranks and stations, such that matters of the invisible world are revealed to him, if he has no supervisor and teacher, absolutely nothing will come of him."

* * *

During an assembly the Shaikh was asked:

"Oh Shaikh, what is Sufism?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"Sufism is forbearance under God's commands and prohibitions, and contentment in and submission to, the decrees of Providence."

Then he said:

"A person only experiences a state of ecstasy which is noble and elevated when that state has as its foundation forbearance under God's commands and prohibitions, and contentment in and submission to, God's decrees and pre-ordaining -- mighty is His glory!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "If a heart doesn't contain a mystery from God and doesn't share a secret with God and doesn't hear words from God, it is because, in that heart, there is no sincerity. And whoever is without sincerity, will in no way find deliverance."

Then he added: "There is a Tradition according to which the Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, declared:

'On the day of resurrection Sincerity and Polytheism will be brought forth and they will kneel before the Lord -- He is exalted! God, He is exalted, will say to Sincerity: "Depart and enter Paradise with your followers!"

And He will say to Polytheism: "Depart and enter Hell-fire with your companions!"

Then the Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, recited:

"Those who come possessed of a virtuous deed, shall receive something better in return, and they shall be safe from terror on that day. But those who come possessed of an evil deed, shall be thrown face first into the Fire.

*Shall you not be rewarded in accordance with your deeds?"*²⁸

Then the Shaikh said: "Seek sincerity, for in sincerity there is deliverance both in this world and in the world to come. The Prophet of God, God's blessings be upon him, has declared:

Book Two, Chapter Three

'Oh Mo'āz²⁹, make your faith sincere and even a few works shall suffice you.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The learned man is the sincere man. Whoever possesses no sincerity in his heart, possesses no knowledge in the domain of his religion and the divine law."

Someone asked: "Oh Shaikh, what is sincerity?"

The Shaikh replied: "The Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has declared: 'Sincerity is a mystery from among God's mysteries and is located in the servant's innermost heart and soul. God's pure glance rests upon that mystery and the mystery's sustenance comes from the pure glance of the divine sublimity. Only this sustenance is a party to the mystery. The affirmer of God's Oneness³⁰ who really is an affirmer of God's Oneness, is so through this mystery.'"

A person asked: "Oh Shaikh, what is that mystery?"

He replied: "It is a subtle substance from among God's favors, as He has declared:

*'God shows favor to His servants.'*³¹

That subtle substance is only to be had through the generosity and mercy of God, *He is exalted*, and not through the servant's acquisition and action.

In the beginning, God brings forth a certain need, a sorrow, and a longing in the servant's heart. Then He fixes his glance on that need and sorrow, and, through His generosity and mercy, places in that heart a subtle substance about *which angels close to the divine presence and dispatched prophets have no knowledge*.

This subtle substance is called 'the mystery of God', and it is sincerity.

God has told the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, to announce to mankind:

'Say: let them rejoice in God's generosity and mercy, for these are better for them than all the riches they amass.'"³²

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The man whose life is based on his Self, dies when his spirit departs, but the man whose life is based on sincerity and truthfulness, lives on. It (sincerity and truthfulness) transfers him from one abode to another."

Then he added:

"Sincerity is something which is not recorded by the Two Angels³³, nor is it recognizable to a human being."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whoever is alive through Self, dies when death occurs, but whoever is alive through sincerity and truthfulness, never dies. It (sincerity and truthfulness) transfers from one dwelling to another."

And then the Shaikh recited:

*"I swear, oh 'Azza³⁴, by Him Whose slave I am,
By Him Who is honored by the pilgrims at Mecca
And all that fills the plains of 'Arafāt³⁵.
I desire no other beloved apart from you.
But trust what I say; the noble are trustworthy.
If I were under earth and you should call,
I'd answer your voice, though bones were turned to dust.
Oh enticer, when I think of you, my heart
Is cut to shreds and my sorrows multiply."*

Then an ecstatic state came over the Shaikh. He let out a shout and recited:

*"Though I have died and twenty years go by,
Do not imagine my grave is empty of love.
Put your hand upon my grave and ask: 'Who lies here?'
You will hear a voice reply: 'How fares my beloved?'"*

The Shaikh then said: "This pure mystery is the beloved of those who profess God's Oneness. This mystery is eternal and will

Book Two, Chapter Three

never become non-existent, for it exists through God's glance and belongs to God. It is pure of any share in the realm of creation. In this bodily frame it is something on loan. Whoever possesses that mystery, is living, and whoever does not possess it, is an animal. And there is a difference between an animal and the living³⁶."

* * *

One day our Shaikh said from the pulpit:

"Verily, he who lives in God shall never die."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"If you wish the True to exist in your heart, cleanse your heart of all that is other than He.

Indeed, the king will not enter a house that contains furnishings and goods, but he enters a house that is empty, in which there is only he, and you are not there with him.

As one says (verse):

'Go on, get out! This house is where I live.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "My superiority over you lies in this – that you speak with me, while I speak with Him, and you listen to me, while I listen to Him. You are with me but I am with Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Being God's bondsman consists of two things: perfection of need for God and this is an inner state, and perfect imitation of the example of the Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and that is something in which there is no ease or pleasure for the Self."

Then he said:

"Happy the man whose breath during his life has been one and the same. Happy the man who has exhaled a pure breath all his life, a breath in opposition to his Self ³⁷.

Wherever the Self prevails, it is not breath but smoke of a baker's oven that is exhaled from the bodily frame.

When the Self is vanquished and subdued by the light of Islam, then the breaths exhaled from the bodily frame are pure and of good faith, like the breeze of the east wind that passes through a rose garden.

Any sick person whom this breeze reaches, will immediately acquire relief, and the breeze will be the cause of his cure."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sufism is the will of God at work among His creatures without the intervention of creatures."

Then he added: "This change and fickleness, upheaval and disturbance, all come from the Self. Wherever a trace of the lights of Truth is revealed, there is no tumult and clamor, no change and fickleness.

If you are with God, there is no anxiety, whereas with the Self, there is no peace."

Then he recited:

"A man must smile though heart and liver burn.
Needless to say, a man such as this is rare."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked:

"Oh Shaikh, what is chivalrous generosity ³⁸?"

The Shaikh replied:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, has declared: 'You want the same for your brother as you want for yourself.'"

Then he said:

"The essence of chivalrous generosity is that you forgive mankind for doing what it does. Moreover, he who consorts with the generous, while not possessing generosity, is quickly put to shame."

*** * ***

Our Shaikh has said:

"Verily, God, He is exalted, looks into the heart of His servant three hundred and sixty times every day to see if the servant's heart is attentive to Him. If He finds that he is attentive to Him, He gives him increase and honors him with greater bounty and lights, and attracts his heart unto Him."

Whoever does not receive attraction from above, his affairs will not be put in proper order, nor will he prosper, as the shaikhs have said: 'An attraction from the True is better than all the pious works of men and the Jinn³⁹.'"

*** * ***

Then he said: "Attraction is better than striving. Unless there is attraction, there will be no striving, and if there is no striving, there will be no vision."

*** * ***

Then he said:

"Whoever seeks God through acts of worship, will not find Him, whereas whoever seeks God through God Himself, is on the verge of finding Him."

*** * ***

Then he said:

"If God unfurled the carpet of His grandeur and excellence, the sins of the first and last of mankind would fit in one of its margins, and if but one of God's springs of generosity were to appear, the sinner would be joined with the man of virtue."

* * *

Then he said: "The darvishes are not 'they'⁴⁰. If they were 'they', they would not be darvishes.

In their name⁴¹ is their attribute. Whoever seeks the path of the True, must pass by way of the darvishes (*darvišān*), for they are the door unto Him (*dar-e vey iṣān*)."

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"Detach yourself from everything, so that everything comes to be yours."

And then he said:

*"Recollection deters, while bounty makes me desire.
But Reality restrains me from this or that.
No being or recollection gives me delight.
It is enough for my heart that I call to you."*

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked:

"Oh Shaikh, what is the path?"

The Shaikh replied:

Truthfulness and kindness. Truthfulness with God and kindness to God's creatures. Indeed, the shaikhs have agreed that manly virtue consists of tolerating the faults of one's brothers.

And a man does not become a leader until he has two qualities: renunciation of the things people possess and turning a blind eye to whatever they do."

* * *

One day our Shaikh said to a disciple: "May I not see you reach the desired end, for whoever's desire has been placed in his lap, has been put out the door. Wash your hands of whoever remains concerned with his own desires and dislikes, for he is an affliction to himself and to men at large."

Then he said: "Everyone has some desire. My desire is that I have no desire."

Then he added: "One day I was in the presence of Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb⁴². He was giving a discourse and amongst the things he said was this saying: 'Everyone has a desire. Bu'l-'Abbās's desire is never to have a desire.'"

* * *

A darvish asked our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is this burning in men's hearts?"

The Shaikh replied: "It is called the fire of need. God, *He is exalted*, has created two fires. One is the living fire, and the other the dead fire.

The living fire is the fire of need which He has placed in the hearts of His servants in this world, so that their Self is burned, and that is a luminous fire.

When the Self is burned, the fire of need becomes the fire of yearning. And the fire of yearning is never extinguished, not in this world, nor in the world to come.

This is the fire the Prophet, *God's blessings be upon him*, referred to, declaring:

'When God wishes the good of one of His servants, He casts a light in his heart.'

And the Prophet was asked: 'Oh Prophet of God, what is the sign of that light?'

He replied: 'Shunning this House of Delusion, turning in repentance to the House of Eternity, and preparation for death before death's arrival.'"

The darvish asked: "Oh Shaikh, when He bestows that pure vision, does the fire of yearning die down?"

The Shaikh recited (verse):

"One can never have enough of gazing at the moon!"

That vision increases one's thirst. It doesn't bring satiety. For just as there is a Hidden today, tomorrow when he beholds Him, there will be a Hidden as well.

Access unto His way of being is impossible. Whoever beholds Him, does so within the limits of his own faith. That⁴³ is the light of faith which God conveys from one's heart into one's eye, so that through that light of faith one may behold His majesty and beauty within the limits of vision of one's faith.

And the dead fire is the fire of Hell, the fire of darkness and terror. Whoever is not burned in the living fire, will be burned in the dead fire -- the one in this world and the other in the world to come."

Then the Shaikh recited these verses:

"The fire of Nimrod did not burn Abraham⁴⁴.
Before Abraham the fire turned to ash.
Till you burn in this fire, you surely won't become pure,
Whether you call me mad, or say this is nonsense."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Seven hundred spiritual guides have spoken concerning the mystic path. The first said the same as the last. The mode of expression was different but the meaning was the same, namely:

'Sufism is abandoning affectation.'

And there is no greater affectation on your part than 'you-ness', for while you are busy with yourself, you are cut off from Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "It has been said: 'Sufism consists of two things: to look in one direction and to live one way.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "If someone wishes, is it possible to travel the mystic path without a *pir*?"

The Shaikh replied: "It is impossible because someone is required to guide him along the way, someone who has already reached the goal traveling that path, who will tell him what are faults and what are virtues on this path. At each stage he will say this is the such-and-such stage, here one must remain longer. And if there is a dangerous place somewhere, he will tell him to be on his guard, and will give him kindly encouragement, so that traveling that road with a strengthened heart, he may reach the goal.

When he has reached the goal, he will find peace.

Whoever travels according to his own nature, is like a demon exhausted in the middle of the desert. He doesn't know in what direction the road lies. As God, *mighty is His glory*, has declared:

*'Like him whom the devils seduce, bewildered in the land.'*⁴⁵

The foundation of this path is obedience to the *pir*. Whatever the *pir* orders, the disciple must be obedient.

*'If you obey him, you shall be rightly guided.'*⁴⁶

When the disciple is obedient to the *pir*, it is just as if he were obeying God.

*'He who obeys the Prophet, is obeying God.'*⁴⁷

'And the spiritual master is to his community, what the prophet is to his nation.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Shun associating with wicked men and do not cut yourself off from God through the company of the virtuous."

Don't associate with the bad but don't be satisfied with the company of the virtuous either."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Certain conditions are required to be a Sufi companion.

The best clothes for the servant of God to don are the clothes of humility. No adornment is better for the servant than the adornment of humility; only humility will elevate the servant.

'Whoever humbles himself for God, God will raise on high.'

Humility is to be broken in shame and to bow the head in submission on this path and not to display oneself in one's works.

And there is no worse calamity for the servant on the mystic path than haughtiness. Haughtiness is holding one's head high and acting egotistically, as when Eblis⁴⁸ said:

*'I am better than he is!'*⁴⁹

Through one act of egotism, the worship he had practiced for several thousand years was reduced to nought.

And it is related that Eblis wanders about in the bazaars, saying: 'Oh people of the city and the countryside, be careful! Don't act egotistically and don't say "I". Look at what happened to me because of acting egotistically.'

Proud bearing and grandeur are His attributes. Therefore, whoever opposes the Lord and disputes with Him and acts proudly, his neck will be bowed and he will be destroyed."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sufism through verbal instruction is like a building built on dung."

Then he said:

"This is not a thing that can be sewn onto someone with a needle, or tied to him with a piece of thread."

Book Two, Chapter Three

This is not a task that reaches fulfillment through words. Until you cut, blood will not flow. This task can only be brought to completion through need.

There must be need! There must be need!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whoever is in accordance with me concerning 'this affair'⁵⁰, has a family tie with me, even if he is separated from me by many stages.

And he who opposes me in 'this affair' is a nobody for me, even if he is one of my kinsmen.

I am with you though many stages lie between us."

Then the Shaikh said: "A dearth of God has come, a dearth of God!"

And whenever the Shaikh saw a caravan, he would ask: "Are any of my fellow-workers with you, those who wear the patched frock?"

And then he would say to his group: "My fellow-workers are those who have no work⁵¹ in this world or in the world to come."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The decision belongs to the moment, and command belongs to the invisible world."

Then he recited:

"Your hair's so black, you've become a mine of musk⁵².
Through so much seeking, you've become all that!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "It's easy for all these people, since their dealings are with the Compassionate, the Merciful. For me it's worse, because I'm dealing with a Coercer and a Subduer.

For the near and intimate, what bewilderment!
They are aware of the Sultan's punishment."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "However much I do, I'm unable to cock my hat⁵³ in the presence of this God."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A friend is necessary for every undertaking and you must have friends on the mystic path to guide you to God and give you help when you are at a loss.

And even though your friend is God, *He is exalted*, nonetheless this is a sign⁵⁴."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "I look from east to west, just as you look down at a tray and see whatever is on it. I look that way and I see whether there is anyone somewhere who is taken with 'this affair'⁵⁵.

I see it has come to an end and it has come to an end here with me. If throughout the whole world there were a person or some group taken with 'this affair', it would be my duty to crawl to them on my side."

* * *

Our Shaikh commented on the following Tradition:

"My community will come to be divided into some seventy odd sects. One of them will be saved, the others will dwell in Hell-fire."

And our Shaikh said:

"In the Hell-fire of their Selves."

* * *

The Qor'ānic reciter 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abi Šāleh, who was our Shaikh's Qor'ānic reciter, has related:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"One day during the *samā*⁵⁶ our Shaikh was in an ecstatic state and was crying out and dancing in a circle. When he sat and calmed down and we had grown silent, the Shaikh said: 'Seven hundred thousand spiritual masters have spoken on the nature of Sufism. The most complete and the best of all they said is this:

"Making use of the moment for what is best suited to it."

• • •

Our Shaikh has said:

"Sufism once was a pain. It has become a pen."

• • •

Our Shaikh has said:

"Considering works as coming from God's creatures is an error. Creatures are no more than a basket filled with rubbish!"

• • •

Our Shaikh has said:

"People attached to formalities are dead during their life, while people attached to truths are alive even in their death."

• • •

Our Shaikh has said: "For long periods I wandered everywhere in the mountains and in the desert and 'this affair' pursued me. I sought God in the mountains and in the desert. And there were times when I found Him.

Now I have become such that I cannot find myself because all is He. I do not exist.

And for the reason that He existed but I did not, and He shall exist when I am no more, I am now unable, even for one moment, to exist in my own Self, or to be somebody. Nor is it right for me to pretend to direct vision of God, to Sufism, or to a life of asceticism.

Can a person who possesses nothing and has no name, have a name put on him? Or can anything be attributed to him? That is simply not conceivable."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whoever desires Him, should come here in order to catch a whiff of Him. Those other assemblies are assemblies of religious learning, while this is an assembly of the True. There they seek status, rank and grandeur but here they give up status, rank and grandeur. Their seeking after grandeur is a mistaken pursuit. Grandeur belongs to God.

*'Grandeur belongs entirely to God.'*⁵⁷

He has declared in His own words: 'Grandeur is entirely Mine from all eternity. So what does it matter to me, oh darvish? You consider all this to be something. All this grandeur I give to you entirely. When you belong to Me, I give you My own self. Nothing else has any value.'

Just as that spiritual master in Karaqān⁵⁸ said to me: 'He has given you His very self.'

That is, there was nothing left over for Bu'l-Ḥasan.

And one of the maxims old ladies repeat when their affairs don't turn out well, goes like this: 'Our Lord doesn't leave any debt unpaid.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Any Qor'ānic reader⁵⁹ who disapproves of the *samā*⁶⁰ of the darvishes, is a good-for-nothing on the mystic path."

* * *

One day the Shaikh was speaking before an assembly in Meyhana, when a caravan passed by. The Shaikh said: "Happy this caravan!"

A little dog passed by the spot and the Shaikh said: "Happy this dog! Tomorrow on the day of resurrection it shall have honor

Book Two, Chapter Three

above the dog of the Seven Sleepers⁶¹, for it has heard these words of mine."

* * *

The Shaikh was asked in Nishapur: "Is there any sign by which the servant of God may know in this world whether the Lord is content with him or not?"

Our Shaikh replied: "It is only necessary to observe the condition in which God, *He is sublime and exalted*, maintains the servant. If the servant is content with his condition, you must know that the Lord is content with him. But if he's not content, you must know that the Lord is also not content with him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Wherever mention is made of Bu Sa'id, hearts become joyful, because nothing at all of Bu Sa'id remains with Bu Sa'id."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "How is it that the True can be seen but the darvish cannot be seen?"⁶²

Our Shaikh replied: "Because the True, *He is exalted*, is existent and one can see what exists. The darvish is non-existent and one cannot see what does not exist."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Oh Muslims, know for certain that you will not be left without a burden. If you take up the burden of His Truth, you will find comfort immediately and tomorrow you will be at peace.

If not, vanity will be loaded onto your back and you will experience no peace in this world or in the world to come."

* * *

The Shaikh was questioned about the meaning of this Qor'ānic verse:

*"Verily, God's remembrance is greater."*⁶³

He replied: "The meaning is that God's remembrance of His servant is greater. This is so because the servant cannot recall Him, until He first recalls the servant.

It is indeed greater that the Lord remembers the servant and gives him divine assistance, so that the servant as well may remember the Lord.

If you look at this carefully, it is God Who is remembering Himself. The servant does not exist in the matter at all.

The servant runs about a lot and travels around the world, imagining there is peace somewhere. Without God there is no peace. Wherever you go, if He is not on hand, there will be no peace. But in fact God is everywhere. What is the purpose of going somewhere? You can see Him right here.

For a time I ran about and wearied my feet.
But in the end I found no profit without you.
Then I shook your hand in an oath of fidelity.
Now in my home I sit, grown calm and at peace."

* * *

A Qor'ānic reciter chanted this verse before our Shaikh:

*"Those who have faith and do good works, shall dwell in the gardens of Paradise for all eternity, desiring no change of place."*⁶⁴

Our Shaikh recited:

"Beholding fair beauties only brings heart's grief
To the man whose hands and purse contain no silver."

Another Qor'ānic reciter chanted:

*"As for them, God will change their misdeeds into good actions."*⁶⁵

Our Shaikh recited:

"You lead me to the pit but extend your arm"⁶⁶.

Book Two, Chapter Three

All upset, you call on God and wring your hands."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "There's no need for anyone more powerful than Solomon and no king will ever be more magnificent than he was. Despite all that, there was nothing in his hands but wind.

*'Unto Solomon was the wind.'*⁶⁷

The worth of his kingship was revealed to him when he was taken down from the throne and Şakr-e Jenni⁶⁸ – who was a devil – was put there in his place to rule over the same kingdom which he had ruled.

Through Şakr it was made clear to Solomon that kingship is not worthy of your looking upon it with pride, nor does it merit that you say:

*'Bestow on me a kingdom which will not be fit for anyone after me.'*⁶⁹

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "What is good fortune?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Much has been said on this subject but I say:

Good fortune is a happy concurrence.

When it appears, it is a favor conferred in pre-eternity.

In the beginning there is first divine favor. Friendship with God becomes evident in the end.

All colors are made in the world. Only hearts have been colored by God in pre-eternity, as He has declared:

*'The dye of Allah! And who possesses a better dye than Allah?'*⁷⁰

The first I learned of love was love for you.

And the heart never forgets its first beloved.

This good fortune is not something that can be sewn on with a needle, or attached with a string, or weighed with a scale. When it doesn't exist, it doesn't exist.

To whomever it has come, it came as beauty.
What has come, you know, is not like what was brought."

* * *

Someone rose to his feet and asked: "Oh Shaikh, what planning of our affairs is right for us?"

The Shaikh replied:

"Planning is perdition. In matters of love, planning is duplicity."

There is no worse error than planning with your own enemy concerning your friend and lord. Planning is characteristic of the Self and the Self is an enemy.

If you wish to plan your affairs, you must do so with someone intelligent, and from the beginning of time to the destruction of the world there has not been, nor shall there be, a greater person than Moṣṭafā – *God's blessings be upon him!* Plan with him. Pay attention to what he has said and act accordingly. And stay away from whatever he has prohibited.

All lengthy speech you must abbreviate
And guard against the friend of bad influence.

Your friend of bad influence is your Self.

'Have you seen the man who takes his own passion for his God?'⁷¹

As long as you are with yourself, you shall never attain peace.

Your Self is your prison. If you come forth from the Self, you shall attain the peace of eternity."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Once a darvish asked our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is reason?"
Our Shaikh replied:

"Reason is an instrument of servitude to God.

Through reason insight into the condition of divine Lordliness cannot be attained. For reason is created and the created has no access to the eternal."

* * *

A darvish said to our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, pronounce a blessing on behalf of my affairs."

Our Shaikh replied: "Do not be apt for any affairs! Whatever affair you become apt for, you will remain in its bonds and it will become a veil between you and God.

The foundation of being God's bondsman is non-existence. As long as one atom of affirmation remains in your attributes, the veil remains. Affirmation is the attribute of God and negation is the attribute of the bondsman.

Moses said:

*'Put the charge on Aaron.'*⁷²

He was not fleeing from prophethood but he had come to find pleasure in negation. He meant: 'Leave me in this non-existence, for I have had enough of my being, and have experienced many afflictions.'

God declared: 'Prophethood does not require the negation of substitution.'

The Prophet, *God's prayers and peace be upon him*, spoke the same way in the cave of Ḥerā⁷³: 'Oh Gabriel, leave me as I am, in my destitution.'

But the angel commanded:

*'Recite!'*⁷⁴

And Moḥammad, *peace be upon him*, replied: *'I do not know how to recite.'*⁷⁵ Here there are many great men and men of

worldly power. What do you want from the hireling of Kadija and the orphan of Abu Ṭāleb⁷⁶.'

You'll get no profit out of staying at home.
What you must do, is bind your robe to mine."

* * *

The Shaikh has said: "Kings do not sell their bondsmen. Strive to become a bondsman. When He accepts you in servitude and causes you to hear the call '*oh My servant*⁷⁷', your affairs shall surpass all analogy and power of disposal."

* * *

Someone asked: "Oh Shaikh, does the servant lose the status of servitude through sin?"

The Shaikh replied: "Not if he is really a servant. Our father Adam, *peace be upon him*, because he really was a servant, did not cease to be a servant of the Lord through sin.

Be His servant and be however you wish!

To sin in humility is better than to serve God in pride.

Adam displayed need, whereas Eblis⁷⁸ adopted pride.

If it were not for sinners, God's mercy would go to waste."

* * *

One day our Shaikh was discoursing and he said: "Nod your heads in assent to these words, so that on the resurrection day when they ask you who you are, you may reply: 'We are the ones who nodded in assent to the words of your people.'

Then they will accept you as coin of sound standard."

* * *

Our Shaikh was questioned concerning this Qor'ānic verse:

*"Your Lord creates what He wishes, and chooses freely."*⁷⁹

Book Two, Chapter Three

The Shaikh said: "One must be chosen by the Lord. One must be worthy and given distinction by the Lord. The servant's choice plays no part in the matter.

We are unable to utter a word without Him. Nothing can be achieved by us, nothing at all. It were better for us if we didn't exist.

If an attraction appears, the servant becomes adorned by the attraction. He becomes prepared for striving and worthy of sight. When he has acquired sight, he is able to hear. Then he is told:

*'Say: let them rejoice in God's generosity and mercy, for these are better than all the goods they amass.'*⁸⁰

That is, say: be happy with Our generosity and mercy, for delighting in this is better for you than all that they amass.

God has said to me:

*'This is better, oh son of Abu'l-Keyr'*⁸¹.

I say unto you:

'This is better, oh family of Abu'l-Keyr.'

Every person delights in something. There are those who delight in this world and those who delight in the world to come. Others delight in the spiritual ranks and others in virtuous deeds.

I say to you that all this was not and then came to be, whereas He was, is, and shall be.

Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin⁸² used to teach the old ladies in Meyhana this invocation: 'Oh You, oh You Who are all, oh You Who possess all! *You are alone and have no partner.*'

And all this amounts to what God, *He is exalted*, has declared:

'This is better than all the goods they amass.'

Oh Muslims, the man who possesses some aroma of this, or the man who has had his fill of his own Self, has become a stranger.

When speech opens, it is in response to the need of a person who possesses some mystic aroma and passion.

There must be need! There must be need! Need is a longing. Longing does not come through action. One moment longing ex-

ists, another moment it does not. When longing appears, it appears in love. When love appears, all is love.

For this reason they⁸³ have said: 'Need is a magnet which draws unto itself the secrets of reality.'

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Four thousand years before the Lord, *He is exalted*, created our bodily frames, He created our souls and kept them in His presence.

At that time He shed a light on them and He knew what portion of light each soul received. In accordance with that portion, He bestowed favor upon the souls, and so they were at peace in that light and became cultivated in it.

Persons who find peace and affection in one another in this world, had been close to one another in that realm. Here they love each other and are called 'divine lovers'. They are brothers and love each other for God's sake.

Thus, all who seek God recognize, through that seeking, one another's scent.

'Just as horses smell one another.'

That is, those souls recognize each other by their scent, like horses do.

If one is in the East and one is in the West, they find affection and solace in accounts of one another's words and deeds. And if one lived in the first century and the other in the fifth century⁸⁴, the latter will only find profit and solace in the words of the former.

This group of men has been adorned with the favor of God – *He is exalted!* Nothing causes them to turn away from the Lord, neither affliction, nor blessings, neither miraculous powers, nor mystical stations.

Whoever settles for one of these things, is a liar, for miraculous powers and mystical stations, mystical states and spiritual degrees, all of these are not of God.

These are all portions allotted to the servant. And whenever the servant settles for this, he becomes a worshipper of portions."

* * *

The Shaikh has said: "Oh Muslims, how long will you go on with 'I' and 'I'? Be ashamed of yourselves and stop! Whatever you cannot say on resurrection day, don't say here and now, for it will be an affliction upon you.

This 'I-ness' will bring about mankind's destruction. This 'I-ness' is the tree of damnation. The first person⁸⁵ who said 'I', that 'I' was the tree of his damnation.

Whoever says 'I' when speaking about anything whatsoever, the fruit of that tree shall reach him. And every day he shall be further from God.

Jāber b. 'Abdollāh⁸⁶ knocked at the door of the Prophet's room -- *peace be upon him!* The Prophet, *upon him be peace*, asked: 'Who is it?'

Jāber said: '*It is I.*'

The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, rose to his feet and as he was coming to open the door, he said: '*I, I? For my part, I don't say "I".*'

Since the Prophet became free of his 'I-ness' and was true and sincere in this, God declared: 'Now at My command recite:

*"Say: this is my path. I call you to God with sure knowledge, I⁸⁷."*⁸⁸

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Do not detest calamities, for by them the hypocrites are harvested."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked about the interpretation of this Tradition:

"One hour of reflection is better than a year's devotional practices."

Asrār al-Towḥid

Our Shaikh said: "An hour reflecting on one's own non-existence is better than a year of religious devotions with the thought that one exists."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked about the *samāʿ*⁸⁹ and he replied:

"The samāʿ is a living heart and a dead Self."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Without learning I speak before assemblies and I give banquets without money."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "For a long time I sought the True. There were times when I found Him, and times when I did not. Now I've become such that as much as I seek myself, I don't find me anymore. I've become entirely 'He', for all is He.

For years I was absorbed in the how and why.
How can this be so and why is this like that?
When the sleeping man emerges from his sleep,
The pain is lighter in his wakefulness."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A man must have everything, so that he wants nothing!"

A certain man of spiritual distinction has interpreted this saying as follows: "A man should have visited every neighborhood and had every experience, so that his heart doesn't pay attention to anything."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whoever has a good opinion of himself, doesn't know himself. And whoever is suspicious of God, doesn't know God."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"If forgiveness were not the dearest thing to God, He is exalted, He would not have afflicted with sin what is dearest to Him in creation, namely Adam – peace be upon him!"

* * *

Our Shaikh was questioned concerning:

"The tongue of the man who knows God is impeded."

Our Shaikh replied:

"That is to say, is impeded from quarreling with God's creatures, for indeed, the Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, was the most spiritually knowing of mankind and his tongue was not impeded."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked about:

"He who knows himself, knows his Lord God."

Our Shaikh replied:

"He who knows his Self as non-being, knows his Lord God as existence."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"It is part of the poor man's superiority over the rich that at the time of death and on the resurrection day everyone wishes to be poor. This is the state of truthfulness, and no one at that time wishes for riches."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "What is the interpretation of '*the supreme victory*'⁹⁰?"

Our Shaikh replied: "There are two enemies. One is within your shirt and the other is outside.

Whenever you are given supremacy over the latter, that is called *the victorious conquest*. And whenever you are given supremacy over the one inside your shirt, that is known as *the supreme victory*.

This is the interpretation of '*the supreme victory*'."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whatever is suitable for God's creatures, is not suitable for God. And whatever is suitable for God, is not suitable for God's creatures."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The practice of taking home choice morsels from a banquet originates with Moṣṭafā -- *peace be upon him!* The Prophet brought us choice morsels from the Friend's presence in the beyond.

Now choice morsels must only be brought home from the house of the Friends, not from the house of strangers."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "By taking greater pains, you can increase your pains but you cannot increase your daily bread. That comes through divine bounty, not through our effort."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "It is easier to drag along a mountain by a hair than to emerge from the Self by oneself."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"Whoever in his dealings with God adopts truthfulness, has a patent of Friendship⁹¹ written out for him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "People say: 'He is happy and lives in comfort.'

If they only perceived what I endure, they would all run off and take flight."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "This is not the sort of demon who goes away, if you say '*God is all-powerful!*⁹² This demon bites and leaps at you."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked:

"What is evil and what is the worst of evils?"

The Shaikh replied:

"Evil is you and the worst of evils is you.

And you must not exist."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "God, *He is sublime and exalted*, does not balk at sacrificing a hundred thousand men of Self for the sake of one 'man of heart'."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "After seventy odd years I have come to understand the meaning of these verses:

Justice, you say, has disappeared from the world.
The crime is His but I must seek forgiveness!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Solomon said:

'Bestow on me a kingdom...' '93

And he was given his great kingdom.

When he saw what an affliction kingship is and realized that it is a cause of estrangement from, not a cause of drawing near to, the divine Majesty, he said:

'...which will not be fit⁹⁴ for anyone after me.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Once a man has attained to the path of detachment, Solomon's kingdom has no place in his attention. But if he has not attained detachment, he is aware of the extra bit of cuff that extends beyond his hand.

For this reason the Commander of the Faithful, 'Omar-e Kaṭṭāb⁹⁵, *God be pleased with him*, cut off the extra portion of his sleeve with a knife in the bazaar."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

*"It should be a mystical experience for you, not a devotional exercise."*⁹⁶

* * *

Our Shaikh was questioned about:

*"When night descended over him..."*⁹⁷

Our Shaikh replied:

"The night is the night of God's self-occultation, and the day is the day of God's self-manifestation."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Everything on the side of lust and vanity is Self, whereas whatever contains within it peace from God, is respiration⁹⁸."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"When God, He is exalted, created Reason, He stationed it before Him and said: 'Who am I?'

And Reason was bewildered.

Then God applied to its eyes the collyrium of the light of His Oneness and asked: 'Who am I?'

Reason replied: 'You are Allah. There is no god but You!'

Thus, Reason had no access to knowledge⁹⁹ of Him but through Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "What is knowledge¹⁰⁰ of God?"

He replied: "What our children sing: 'Wipe clean your nose, then talk with us!'"¹⁰¹

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Nearness to God is of three kinds: nearness in terms of distance which is inconceivable, nearness through His knowledge and His power, (learning) which is a duty, and nearness by means of divine generosity and compassion which is possible."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Your present moment is your breath in the space of time between two breaths, one which is gone and one which has not come.

Yesterday is gone and where is tomorrow? The day is today and today is this hour, and this hour is this breath, and the breath is this present moment."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "A launderer washes a robe for one week but it isn't properly clean. When the launderer wishes to wash it with care, he says: 'I will not betray you, nor will I do the job for you negligently. If you want it properly clean, wait while I wash it once again.

Or allow me two weeks and then a white cotton garment will emerge, such that whoever sees it will exclaim: "Bravo, oh master! Bravo!"

* * *

One day during a discourse our Shaikh said:

"Verily, if those who increase their prayers and recitations, and calculate what God owes them, were to calculate what they owe God, they would attain peace."

Then he said:

"The Prophet of God, God's blessings be upon him, has said: 'Be on your guard against keeping company with the dead.'

They asked: 'Oh Prophet of God, who are the dead?'

He replied: 'Men of worldly ties who have been born into a life of affluence.'

Then the Prophet, God bless him, added: 'Be on your guard against a life of affluence, for God's servants are not those who enjoy worldly pleasures.'"

* * *

During an assembly our Shaikh said:

"Life lies in religious learning, repose is in knowing God intuitively¹⁰², and spiritual experience comes through reciting God's names¹⁰³.

Book Two, Chapter Three

The reward for proclaiming God's Oneness, He is exalted, is gazing at God in Paradise. Likewise, Paradise is the reward for carrying out the divine commands, while the reward for shunning what God has forbidden is deliverance from Hell-fire."

Then the Shaikh recited: "Oh people, you are in need of God, whereas God is self-sufficient and deserving of praise.

If He wishes, He can destroy you and replace you with a new creation. Nor is this difficult for Him."¹⁰⁴

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"When God created the spirits, He addressed them without intermediary and made them hear His Word face to face. He said: 'I have created you, so that you may entrust your secrets to Me and I may entrust My secrets to you. But should you not do so, then you may confide in Me and I will confide in you. And should you not do that, then speak to Me and converse with Me. Should you not do this, then listen to Me.'"

Then the eminent Shaikh, God be pleased with him, recited: "When they listen to what has been revealed to the Prophet, you see their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize."¹⁰⁵

Then the Shaikh added: "Verily, the Word of God, He is exalted, is a special eternal attribute which consists neither of a letter, nor of a sound, and it is heard through its own essence.

When God causes His servant to hear His Word without the intermediary of a letter or a sound, that is called conversation and direct address. And when He communicates it to him by creating, in the particular place, what indicates His Word by way of expressions, letters, or any other indications, that is called confiding secrets.

When he creates meanings of His Word within the servant's heart, that is called intimate converse. A condition of the latter category is that it is followed by a compelling knowledge that this is from the Word of God.

Thus, whatever arrives under the terms: confiding secrets, intimate converse, or direct address – is to be construed according to the above ideas.

However, revelation and divine inspiration occur when God's Word enters the soul through the mediation of one of His envoys."

* * *

In the midst of a discourse our Shaikh said:

"Travel to God by making a comely journey. And traveling to God is by means of high aspirations, not by means of footsteps."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Whoever knows God without an intermediary, serves Him without hope of remuneration, while whoever knows Him through an intermediary, serves Him for remuneration."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Attend upon one door! Then the other doors will open for you. And serve one lord! Then all necks will bow before you."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Be slow and you will arrive. Indeed, this is a Master whose dignity is incompatible with haste."

* * *

Our Shaikh was questioned concerning the meaning of this Tradition:

"Verily, God, He is exalted, does not look at your appearance, nor at your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your actions."

Our Shaikh replied: "The worth of every man is his heart, for appearances are a shell, while the heart is the pearl."

Kings do not look at the shell but they look at the pearl. And pearls are different from one another.

Book Two, Chapter Three

Every man's worth is his heart and what every man amounts to in the end, is his heart. The heart sees by means of divine grace and mercy. God, He is exalted, has spoken thus: 'This is the grace of God which He bestows on whom He wishes.'¹⁰⁶

'God distinguishes whom He wishes with His mercy.'¹⁰⁷

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"This world consists of your images and the world to come consists of your images. Everything in the two realms of existence consists of your images. But 'the matter' is beyond name and images.

The mystical stations are movements of appearances and the mystical states are movements of the innermost hearts. But Divine Oneness¹⁰⁸ and direct knowledge of God are beyond appearances and the innermost hearts.

The servant only attains the repose of God's Oneness and the serenity of direct knowledge of God through the sufficiency, care, and providence of the True -- He is sanctified and exalted!"

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"The samā' requires a strong faith, for God, He is exalted, has declared: 'You can cause none to hear'¹⁰⁹ save those who believe in Our signs.'¹¹⁰

The samā' is nourishment for spirits and a remedy for bodies. The samā' belongs to the travelers on the mystic path and whoever has not traveled the mystic path, does not possess 'hearing' in truth¹¹¹."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"If you wish to find Him, seek Him by withdrawing from whatever is other than Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Deliverance lies in submission, whereas affliction is in planning."

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"The road to the hereafter is forbidden to whoever loves this world, for the Prophet, God bless him, has declared: 'Love of this world is the source of all sin.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh as said:

"Whoever finds peace in anything other than God, He is exalted, shall find destruction therein."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Whoever talks to his Self, is absent from his Master, and his return will be unto his Self, for the first offense of the righteous is that they talk with their Selves."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"No one will find salvation until he becomes like the inhabitants of the grave concerning planning, for God, He is exalted, created mankind in destitution without any resource.

The happiest of people is the man whom God has made see the paltriness of his own resource."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked:

"Oh Shaikh, what is the religious law, what is the mystic path, and what is the Truth?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"The religious law consists of acts upon acts, the mystic path consists of character traits upon character traits, and the Truth consists of mystic states upon mystic states.

*And whoever has not undertaken acts by way of self-mortification and in conformity with the *Sunnat*¹¹², will not possess character traits which result from spiritual guidance and following the mystic path, and whoever lacks character traits such as result from spiritual guidance and the mystic path, will not experience mystic states (endowed) with reality, rectitude and discipline."*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"The man whose life is based on his Self, ceases to live when his spirit departs.

But the man whose life is based on obedience to God and truthfulness, lives and is transferred from one abode to another.

Have you not heard the words of the Prophet of God, God's blessings be upon him: 'Oh people of eternal life and permanence, you have been created for permanence, not for annihilation. Indeed, you will be transferred from one abode to another.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"God, He is exalted, revealed to one of His prophets: 'You think that you love Me but if you love Me, remove love of this world from your heart. Love of the world and love of Me are incompatible.'"

* * *

Then our Shaikh said:

"Whatever the servant renounces for the sake of God, God gives him something better in return. And whoever has not lived his life in God and for God, his death will go unreckoned¹¹³."

* * *

Then someone asked the question:

"Oh Shaikh, what brings peace?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"Peace lies in stripping the heart of every desire, for God, He is exalted, has declared: 'We have given them superiority over so many others We created.' 114

That is to say, We have given them superiority by causing them to see their own faults. And the Prophet of God, God's blessings and peace be upon him, has spoken thus: 'When God wishes to benefit one of His servants, He causes him to see his own faults.'"

Then our Shaikh said:

"The source of the Self's faults is love of this world.

The Prophet, God bless him, has said: 'Whoever renounces this world, God implants wisdom in his heart and causes his tongue to speak wisdom. And He reveals to him the faults of this world, both the illness they comprise and their cure.

Whoever says: "There is no god but Allah", has pledged allegiance to God. And once he has pledged allegiance to God, it is not allowed to rebel against Him.

And whoever, in this world, does not delight in recollection of God and in His command, shall not delight in beholding Him in His Paradise in the hereafter."

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "There is nothing better to say than what I am saying, and yet, it would be better, if it didn't have to be said."

* * *

One time a group of great men was in the Shaikh's presence. One of them said: "Everything I say, I do as well."

Our Shaikh replied: "My case is different from that. Whatever I think, I do."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Oh idol, once you are nothing, then you exist.
Once you are dust, then there's no doubt you're pure.

Until a man is annihilated as to his human attributes, he will not become existent."

* * *

Our Shaikh was questioned concerning love. Our Shaikh replied:

"Love is God's net."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "You do not know, nor do you know that you do not know, nor do you wish to know that you do not know."

* * *

Our Shaikh often said: "Oh Lord, whatever reaches You from me, *'I seek forgiveness of God'*, and whatever comes to me from You, *'Praise be to God'*."

* * *

Our Shaikh would recite from the Qor'ān and whenever he came to a verse where an oath occurs, he would say: "Oh Lord, how long will this weakness remain with You?"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Every heart that contains within it love of this world, is a distracted heart and a distracted heart is neither worthy of gain, nor of loss."

* * *

Ḥasan-e Baṣri was one of the esteemed men of the generation of the Followers¹¹⁵. One day someone asked him:

"How are you? And how is your condition?"

Ḥasan replied: "Oh my brother, thirty years ago I closed the door on my Self and have since sat awaiting His command."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "Distraction of the heart comes from love of this world and as long as worldly love is with you, the heart will never become collected, for the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has said:

'Love of this world is the source of all sin.'

A soldier has settled in the house. Will he allow anything else to come into the house?

Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem Beṣr-e Yāsīn¹¹⁶ often recited these verses:

'My love, I want to come and be your guest,
Clandestinely and hidden from jealous eyes.
Empty the house and come to meet your guest.
In the house with me let no one else remain.'"

Book Two, Chapter Three

* * *

Then our Shaikh said: "What the Prophet, *God's blessings be upon him*, said is a perfect saying:

'Happy the man whose concerns God has made one single concern. As for the man whose concerns are diverse, God does not care in what valley He destroys him.'"

* * *

Then he said:

"Everything that distracts you from God, is of evil portent for you.

Whatever occupies you, even if it is only a needle, for you that is 'the world'. And whatever is 'the world' for you, is your affliction and distractedness.

Whatever is your distractedness, constitutes your falling away from 'this higher meaning'¹¹⁷, both in this world and in the world to come."

* * *

Then our Shaikh said: "Pir Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin, who was one of the great men of Meyhana, often used to recite these verses:

The one who is alive through Him and has died
Through Him to all but Him! Nor will you gain life
From Him until you have died to all but Him.
You want station and purity but your feet are soiled.
Low-minded one, I fear you don't deserve Him."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked why the following should be: "Oh Shaikh, as much as we plan our affairs, we do not reach the goal with regard to 'this higher meaning'."

Our Shaikh replied:

"Planning is perdition."

Planning one's affairs is the work of the uninformed. There is no more fearsome highwayman than planning.

It has been said:

'Seek God by renouncing planning, for planning on this path is deceit.'

* * *

Then he said: "The most stupid of mankind is the person who plans with an enemy concerning a friend. This form of planning comes from a lack of inward knowledge of God¹¹⁸.

There was an old man who often repeated this invocation:

'Oh Lord God, I complain to You about my lack of inward knowledge of You.'

* * *

Then he said: "Sa'ida al-Şufiya was one of the female recluses of the mystic path. Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Rahmān has mentioned her in *The Classes of Female Recluses*¹¹⁹. A group of Sufis once went to the door of her cell to greet her and receive her blessing. They said: 'Invoke God on our behalf.'

That divinely assisted woman said:

'May God remove from before you every obstacle that separates you from Him.'

* * *

Then our Shaikh said:

'The man of forced behavior is secluded by his planning and is cut off by his pretension in all his affairs.'

* * *

Toward the end of his life our Shaikh said: "I saw Bu'l-Fazl-e Hasan¹²⁰ in a dream and said to him: 'I have given up all my friends.'

Book Two, Chapter Three

He replied: 'Oh what good friends you had when you had them, and how much better your giving them up, now that you have given them up!'"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

"Paying a visit on alternate days with presence of heart is better than constant visits with a heart that is disinclined."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "You are the bondsman of whatever you are attached to."

* * *

Then he said: "As long as a person sees the purity of his own religious acts, he says: '*You and I!*'"

But when his view alights on the grace and mercy of God, then all he says is: '*You!*'"

At that point his servitude has become true."

And then he said: "Pir Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin¹²¹ often used to recite:

'If I bear this love for you to the very grave,
I'll shout for joy but know the feat was yours.'"

* * *

The Shaikh has said:

"Whoever does not see that he is in greater need of the reward of almsgiving than the poor man is in need of the alms, his almsgiving is null and void."

* * *

A darvish said: "Oh Shaikh, if a person is asleep, can he reach the halting station while sleeping?"

The Shaikh replied: "If he has slept in the shade of sincerity, his very sleep is the forecourt of the halting station.

'The sleep of the man of learning is an act of worship.'"

* * *

The Shaikh was asked about the religious law, the mystic path, and the Truth. Our Shaikh replied: "These are names of stages and stages belong to human nature.

The religious law consists entirely of negation and affirmation applied to bodies and shapes.

The mystic path consists of nothing less than total effacement.

As for the Truth, it is all bewilderment.

When Bu Bakr-e Ṣeddiq¹²², *God be pleased with him*, was on the point of departing from the world, he said:

'Oh You Who give guidance on the path, I am bewildered!'

What he was referring to when he cried out, was bewilderment before the Truth.

These words are a sign and yet, a sign for what is without signs, is unbelief."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "This affair will not reach its end, until the ḳvāja¹²³ departs from the house. 'This belongs to Me!'"

Then the Shaikh recited:

"I've become such that they can't see me now,
Unless, my love, they sit me down before you.
You are the sun and I resemble a mote.
They only know me as a mote in the sun."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Expectation must be eliminated from your affairs. If you wish actions to become light for you, in your actions you must be devoid of desire."

Then he recited:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"The perfect friend is the unacquisitive friend.
What value has an object of fixed price?
The giver counts far more than any gift.
What worth have gifts beside the philosopher's stone?"¹²⁴

* * *

A darvish asked our Shaikh:

"Oh Shaikh, is poverty more complete, or wealth?"

Our Shaikh smiled and recited:

"What a wonder you are, oh my love of Khorasan!
A devotee I, of your wonders of Khorasan!"¹²⁵

Then he said: "More complete, perfected, more excellent, are terms belonging to the religious law. When God causes His sublime glance to alight on someone, that person's poverty becomes wealth and His wealth becomes poverty.

Humanity is a mirror of divine lordship.

God did not look upon anything that He created except man.

'Verily, God, He is exalted, did not look at the world after He created it because of His hatred of it.'

But when He came to the matter of men, He said:

'God, He is exalted, does not look at your appearances but He looks at your hearts.'

When God created all the world, one command was sufficient. He said: *"Be!" And it was.'*

When He came to man, He did not avail Himself of the command but He said:

*'I have created him with My hands.'*¹²⁶

That was with reference to man's bodily frame. When God came to the spirit, He said:

'I have breathed into him of My spirit.'¹²⁷

* * *

The Shaikh has said: "If a ransom was sent from heaven for the sake of Ishmael¹²⁸, on the resurrection day a ransom will be sent on behalf of the riffraff of Moḥammad's community.

"The infidel is brought forth and the Muslim is told: this is your ransom from Hell-fire."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "If a person is capable of keeping company with anyone at all and can listen to anyone talk and is able to eat and sleep with anyone, don't expect to find virtue in him. His soul has been handed over to Satan."

* * *

A darvish asked our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is the fundamental principle of devotion on the mystic path?"

Our Shaikh replied: "That for the devotee willing becomes arising¹²⁹. There is a difference between willing and arising.

In willing there is room for hesitation. Sometimes one wants to and one does, but sometimes one wants to and one doesn't.

In arising, however, there is not so much as a hair's interference.

Willing is partial, while arising is complete.

An attraction is felt, lightning flashes, a pull manifests itself. Then effort is made, then non-existence occurs, and after that the devotee becomes a 'freeman of the realm'¹³⁰.

He becomes single in his sight and in his aspirations."

* * *

A darvish asked our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, what is servitude?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"God created you a free man. Therefore, be free, as He created you."

Book Two, Chapter Three

The darvish said: "Oh Shaikh, the question is about servitude."

Our Shaikh replied: "Don't you realize that until you are freed of this world and the hereafter, you will not become a servant of God?"

Then he recited:

"Since love and liberty were not in agreement,
I became a slave and put aside my will.
Henceforth, however she wishes me, so be it.
Discussion and quarreling no longer exist."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked by a darvish: "Oh Shaikh, what is chivalrous generosity¹³¹?"

The Shaikh replied: "To discuss chivalrous generosity a man of high spiritual aspirations is required. It is not possible to discuss generosity with someone possessed of 'I-ness'."

Then he said: "Error on the part of a man of high spiritual aspiration is an act of religious devotion, whereas the act of devotion of someone possessed of 'I-ness' is error."

Generosity, bravery, courtesy and refinement, are plants that grow in the garden of divine attraction. In the garden of effort are long prayers, fasts, hungerings, nightly vigils, and much almsgiving.

Whatever effort firmly establishes, divine attraction obliterates."

* * *

One day our Shaikh said:

"On the night of his celestial ascension¹³² the Prophet, God bless him, saw a group of angels who were all light. There was light in front of them, light behind them, and light above and below them. The Prophet has said: 'I asked: "Oh Gabriel, who are they?"

He replied: "They are the ones who have known nothing but God.""

* * *

One day our Shaikh said:

"I have been informed that the Truthful Chief, Ja'far b. Moḥammad¹³³ said: 'I have seen nothing better than the rich humbling themselves before the poor, unless it is the poor man's turning away from the rich. For the poor man finds sufficiency in God – He is mighty and glorious!'"

Then the Qor'ānic reciter chanted: "The glory belongs to God, and to His Prophet and the true believers."¹³⁴

* * *

Our Shaikh said:

"Our greatest glory is our need for God, He is exalted, and our humbling ourselves before Him, for the Prophet, God bless him, has declared: 'When God wishes the good of His servant, He shows him the baseness of his Self.'"

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked:

"Which is the more complete, poverty or wealth?"

Our Shaikh replied:

"Independence from everything!"

Then he recited:

*"When we set out at night and you're in the lead,
Recalling you is the best guide for our mounts."*

* * *

Our Shaikh has said:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"How can the Creator be comprehended by means of the created, or how can what possesses temporal limit, comprehend what is without limit?"

* * *

One day during a discourse our Shaikh said:

"I heard that the Truthful Chief, Ja'far b. Moḥammad¹³⁵ has said: The man who is self-sufficient in God, desires no substitute for Him, nor any change of place apart from Him.

Whoever says: "There is no god but Allah", has pledged allegiance to God. And once he has pledged allegiance to Him, he is not allowed to rebel against Him.

And whoever, in this world, does not delight in recollection of God and in His command, shall not delight in beholding Him in His Paradise in the hereafter."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "The first name which is given to a person who sets out on the path of Truth, is that of 'disciple'. And one thousand points have been mentioned which are necessary for the disciple, if he is to bear this name.

First from among the thousand is that his way of living is not like that of people at large. Just as he changes his clothes, everything else as well is the opposite to other men.

His speech is not like that of other people, and his behavior is not like that of other people, and his sitting and rising is not like that of other people. Nor is his eating and sleeping like that of other people.

And whatever else you say, there is no end to it."

* * *

Our Shaikh was asked: "Who is the spiritual guide who has attained to Truth, and who is the sincere disciple?"¹³⁶

Our Shaikh replied: "The spiritual guide who has attained to Truth, is he in whom at least these ten characteristics are found, as proof of his authenticity:

First, he must have become a goal, to be able to have a disciple.¹³⁷

Second, he must have traveled the mystic path himself, to be able to show the way.

Third, he must have become refined and educated, to be able to be an educator.

Fourth, he must be generous and devoid of self-importance, so that he can sacrifice wealth on behalf of the disciple.

Fifth, he must have no hand in the disciple's wealth, so that he is not tempted to use it for himself.

Sixth, whenever he can give advice through a sign, he will not use direct expression.

Seventh, whenever he can educate through kindness, he will not use violence and harshness.

Eighth, whatever he orders, he has first accomplished himself.

Ninth, whatever he forbids the disciple, he has abstained from himself.

Tenth, he will not abandon for creation's sake the disciple he accepts for the sake of God.¹³⁸

If the spiritual guide is like this and is adorned with these character traits, the disciple is bound to be sincere and a good traveler, for what appears in the disciple, is the quality of the spiritual guide made manifest in the disciple."

As for the sincere disciple, our Shaikh has said: "No less than the ten characteristics which I will mention, must be present in the sincere disciple, if he is to be worthy of discipleship.

First, he must be clever in order to understand the spiritual guide's indications.

Second, he must be obedient in order to carry out the spiritual guide's command.

Third, he must be sharp of hearing to perceive what the guide says.

Fourth, he must have an enlightened heart in order to see the spiritual guide's greatness.

Fifth, he must be truthful, so that whatever he reports, he reports truthfully.

Sixth, he must be true to his word, so that whatever he says, he keeps his promise.

Seventh, he must be generous, so that whatever he has, he is able to give away.

Eighth, he must be discreet, so that he can keep a secret.

Ninth, he must be receptive to advice, so that he will accept the guide's admonition.

Book Two, Chapter Three

Tenth, he must be manly¹³⁹ in order to be able to sacrifice his own dear life on the mystic path.

Being adorned with these character traits, the disciple will more easily accomplish his journey and more quickly reach the goal set for him on the mystic path by the spiritual guide.¹⁴⁰

If God is willing -- He is exalted!"

* * *

One day our Shaikh was talking about those who follow rules (in a kānaqāh). He said: "At first a rule is something people adopt with difficulty but then it becomes a habit. Then that habit becomes second nature and finally, what is second nature becomes a reality."

* * *

Our Shaikh said to Abu Bakr-e Mo'addeb: "Rise and bring an inkstand and paper, so that I may dictate a section concerning the rules and practice of the inhabitants of kānaqāhs."

When the inkstand and paper were brought, our Shaikh said: "Write as follows: 'Know that the practice and rules of the inhabitants of kānaqāhs include ten points which they take upon themselves as religious duty, in accordance with the example of the Companions of the Porch¹⁴¹ -- *God be pleased with the latter!* Indeed, those who dwell in a kānaqāh are called Sufis because they are pure (ṣāfi) and because they imitate the actions of the People of the Porch.

Moreover, these ten points which they take upon themselves as a religious duty, are in agreement with the Book of God, *He is exalted*, and the *Sonnat*¹⁴² of Moṣṭafā -- *God bless him!*

The first is this, that they keep their clothes clean, for God has declared:

*"As for your clothes, see that they are clean."*¹⁴³

And they are constantly in a state of ritual purity, for He has declared:

*"In there are men who love to purify themselves, and God loves those who purify themselves."*¹⁴⁴

Second, they reside in a place or an establishment for pious works, as He has declared:

*"There within are men who sing His praises morning and evening."*¹⁴⁵

Third, at the start of the appointed time they perform the ritual prayers in a group, for He has said:

*"Be among those who prostrate themselves in prayer!"*¹⁴⁶

Fourth, they perform prayers during the night, in accordance with God's words:

*"And at night stay awake praying, as a work of supererogation."*¹⁴⁷

Fifth, at dawn they pray much for forgiveness and invoke God, for He has declared:

*"And at dawn they ask for forgiveness."*¹⁴⁸

Sixth, they recite as much of the Qor'ān as they can at break of day and do not speak until the sun has risen, for God has said:

*"Recitation of the Qor'ān at dawn does not go unwitnessed."*¹⁴⁹

Seventh, between the evening and the bedtime prayers they occupy themselves with litanies and recitations, for He has declared:

*"Glorify God even during the night and at the setting of the stars."*¹⁵⁰

Eighth, they receive the needy and the weak and whoever joins their company, and they put up with their burden, for God has said:

Book Two, Chapter Three

"Do not drive away those who invoke their Lord morning and evening, desiring His face."¹⁵¹

Ninth, they do not eat anything without keeping one another company, for He has said:

"Oh you who believe, be true to your agreements."¹⁵²

Tenth, they do not leave one another's presence without mutual consent, as God has declared:

"And when they are with him¹⁵³ for the sake of a common concern, they do not depart until they have asked his permission."¹⁵⁴

Apart from these occasions, they devote their free time to three things: religious study or devotional recitations, earning their livelihood, or giving comfort and benefit to another person.

Furthermore, whoever loves this group of men and gives them whatever help he can, will share the favor and reward God has in store for them, for He has declared:

"And their Lord answered them saying: 'I will not leave the work of anyone of you unrewarded, whether you are a man or a woman; all of you belong together.'¹⁵⁵

And the Prophet, God bless him, has said:

"Whoever loves a group of people, is one of their number."

Also included in this group are those whom Moṣṭafā, God's blessings be upon him, has described as:

"Oh many a one with disheveled hair, covered with dust, clad in a pair of rags, and accorded no importance -- but should he entreat God, God would surely fulfill his wish!

Moreover, al-Barā' b. 'Āzeb¹⁵⁶ was of their number."

And concerning them God, the Lord of the universe, has said:

"They are the rightly guided by the grace of God and by His bounty, and God is all-knowing and wise."¹⁵⁷

"The blessings of God be upon Moḥammad, and upon his family one and all!"

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "Whoever has beheld me and exerts himself on behalf of my offspring and my family, tomorrow he shall be under the parasol of my intercession and shall not be excluded from my intercession."

* * *

Our Shaikh has said: "I requested from God, *mighty is His glory*, my neighbors to the left and to the right, in front and behind. And the Lord has given them to me."

And then the Shaikh said: "My neighbors are Balk, Marv, Nishapur and Herat. I'm not talking about these neighbors here (in Meyhana)."

* * *

And the Shaikh has also said: "I do not need to say anything on behalf of those who are in my immediate surroundings, for anyone who has passed down this street on a donkey or has passed by, or shall pass by, this door of my house, or anyone on whom the light of my candle falls¹⁵⁸ -- the least thing which God, *He is exalted*, shall do for him, is to show him mercy and forgive him."

PRAYERS

* * *

KVāja Bu Ṭāher, our Shaikh's son, has said:

"KVāja Bu Maṣṣur-e Varqāni¹ one day came to visit our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and said: 'Oh Shaikh, indicate a path for me to take!'

Our Shaikh replied: 'Keep to the path which the Lord, *He is exalted*, has commanded.'

Bu Maṣṣur asked: 'Which path is that?'

The Shaikh replied: 'The one He meant when He declared:

*"Follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance."*²

God did not say:

"Follow the path of him who fails."

That is, He declared: "Follow the persons who have returned to Me."

He did not say: "Follow the group which has gone the way of loss and has suffered loss in this world and the world to come."

Bu Maṣṣur asked: 'Oh Shaikh, with what provisions am I to travel this path?'

He replied: 'Be ever reciting:

"Oh hope of those who hope, oh desire of those who desire, do not disappoint my hope, and do not cut off my desire. Oh most merciful of those who show mercy, take me unto You as a Muslim, and unite me with the virtuous."

* * *

KVāja Bu Ṭāher, the Shaikh's son, has also said:

"One day Sultan Ṭoğrel³ sent someone to summon Bu Maṣṣur-e Varqāni, who was his vezier. Bu Maṣṣur said: 'I haven't finished my morning prayer yet. I cannot come.'

The messenger returned before the sultan and reported Bu Maṣṣur's words. The sultan made no comment.

When Bu Maṣṣur was finished with his recitations and came before the sultan, the sultan said: 'Oh KṢāja, whenever I have some business with you and I call you, I am told you're reciting the Qor'ān or performing the prayers, and my business goes unattended.'

KṢāja Bu Maṣṣur replied: 'It is as the sultan declares but you must realize that I am God's bondsman, whereas I am your servant. Until I accomplish what God has commanded, and fulfill my obligations as His bondsman, I may not devote myself to your service.'

If you find a vezier who is not a bondsman of God and may be your servant entirely, I shall return home.'

The sultan said: 'I will certainly not find any servant who is not God's bondsman, nor will I ask more of you.'

Perform whatever service you are able to perform as a bondsman at His royal court. Then come and attend to my affairs.'

When KṢāja Bu Maṣṣur left the sultan's presence and returned home, someone reported what had happened, to our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* Our Shaikh was in Nishapur at the time. When our Shaikh heard the words which KṢāja Bu Maṣṣur had said, he ordered: 'Saddle my horse! I will go to congratulate him.'

When the Shaikh left the kānaqāh, Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb sent a darvish ahead to inform KṢāja Bu Maṣṣur that: 'Shaikh Bu Sa'id is coming to congratulate you.'

When the Shaikh arrived at the door of KṢāja Bu Maṣṣur's house, the doorkeeper said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: 'Hurry! Go inside. Ever since news of the Shaikh's coming reached the kṢāja, he has remained standing in the middle of the house. As much as they tell him to sit down, he replies: "It is not proper that so great a man, for the sake of congratulating me and paying his respects, should be on his feet, while I am seated."'

When the Shaikh entered the house, he saw Bu Maṣṣur standing in the middle of the house. The Shaikh exclaimed: 'Why is the kṢāja on his feet?'

He replied: 'When someone arrived and informed me of the Shaikh's coming, I did not think it proper that the Shaikh should be on his feet for my sake, while I was seated.'

Prayers

The Shaikh said: 'Oh KVāja, I will not think it proper, on the day of resurrection, to be seated while you are on your feet. Until I have seated you, I shall not sit down.'

The kVāja replied: 'My affairs have met with success, now and in the hereafter.'

Having sat down, the Shaikh congratulated him. The kVāja said: 'Oh Shaikh, I was afraid because the sultan is a Turk and excitable. I wouldn't want him to do something in rashness.'

Our Shaikh replied: 'When you go before him, recite the Prayer of Parties⁴. It has been correctly transmitted from the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, that whoever goes before a sultan and recites the Prayer of Parties, will not experience any pain and suffering, and shall return with his wish granted. This is the prayer:

"Oh Lord God, we take refuge in the light of Your holiness, in the magnificence of Your purity, and in the blessing of Your grandeur, from every calamity and every evil and affliction, as well as from the accidents of night and day – other than that which comes from You as a benefit, oh Merciful One!

Oh Lord God, You are our support and through You we are supported, and You are our refuge and we take refuge with You, and You are our shelter and with You we take shelter!

Oh You before Whom the heads of tyrants are lowered and the necks of the Pharaohs are bowed! We take refuge with You from being dishonored by You and having Your veil removed from us, or forgetting to recall You and neglecting to thank You.

Our remembrance of You is our undergarment and our outer garment is our praising You, whether in our sleep, at rest, or on the move, on our travels, or during our day or our night.

Set up for us the pavilions of Your protection and have us enter, one and all, under the protection of Your favor.

Bestow upon us Your bounty, oh Compassionate, oh Merciful, oh You Who: There is no god but You and You alone, and You have no partners. We seek Your forgiveness and unto You we return."

* * *

KVāja Bu Ṭāher has also said:

"On the occasion that our Shaikh was about to send me to Nasā, I went before the Shaikh. The Shaikh taught me the following prayer and said: 'Recite this along the way and do not be forgetful of it:

"Oh Compassionate One, oh Bestower of favor, oh Requirer, oh Proof, oh Sublime, oh Merciful, oh You Who are called upon for assistance, oh You of awesome dignity Who hold eternal sovereignty, oh You Who possess abundant good and beneficence – we take refuge with You against deprivation and abandonment."

* * *

According to sound transmission, our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, God sanctify his awesome soul, pronounced the following prayer during his recitations at dawn:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful -- God's will be done! God alone brings good.

In the name of Allah -- God's will be done! Whatever bounty we possess, comes from God. In the name of Allah -- God's will be done! There is no power and no strength save in God.

In the name of Allah -- and if His name is invoked, nothing on earth or in heaven causes harm. And He is all-hearing and all-knowing.

In the name of Allah, the Healer, in the name of Allah, the Sufficient, in the name of Allah Who confers well-being, in the name of Allah, the Possessor of dignity, Powerful in sovereignty, Awesome in proof. Whatever God wishes, is.

I take refuge with God from Satan: 'We reveal from the Qor'ān that which is a remedy and a mercy for the true believers' ⁵

We take as our fortress the Living One Who does not die and he who wishes evil upon us, we cast aside with: 'There is no god but You!'

And, one and all, we hold on to: 'The firm handle that will never break and God is all-hearing and all-knowing.' ⁶"

* * *

Through sound transmission from Shaikh Abu Sa'id, God sanctify his awesome soul, it is also certain that he recited the following prayer every day after the dawn prayers:

Prayers

"Praise be to God, Lord of Creation -- abundant praise which is good when spoken on His behalf, and confers blessings when offered up to Him -- such as our Lord loves and is pleased with, and such as befits the nobility of His face and His awesome grandeur.

And praise be to God, praise whose number never terminates and whose extent never ends. And praise be to God Who has allowed us this day to dwell within His protection, and praise unto Him in return for His whole creation.

Praise be to God, a praise amounting in number to the good acts of His creatures and their bad acts from the beginning of time until its end. And praise be to God, such praise as equals all the praise of His creatures and their gratitude because He has given us preference over a great part of His creation.

Oh Lord, unto You be praise inclusive of all Your laudable qualities -- in return for all the bounty You have bestowed upon us and upon all Your creatures, each and very one of them.

And the blessings of God, His prophets and His angels, His envoys and all His creatures, upon our Prophet, Moḥammad, and upon his family. And upon him and them, peace and the mercy of God and His blessings!

Welcome, welcome to the two guardians! May God greet you, oh you two scribes, angels, brothers⁷, friends and honest witnesses! May God reward you on my behalf, oh noble companions. Write -- and God have mercy on you and be pleased with you both:

In the name of God, by God, there is no power and no strength save through God. And I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone and He has no partners. And I bear witness that Moḥammad is His bondsman and His envoy, and that Paradise is true and Hell-fire is true.

And that: 'The hour is drawing near, there is no doubt about it, and Allah will raise up those in the graves.'⁸

I am a slave in Your possession, and I am unable to convey unto myself the good I desire, or to avert from myself the evil I am on guard against.

I have adopted the disposition of Islam and the declaration of belief in God's unity⁹, the religion of our Prophet Moḥammad, God's blessings be upon him, and the creed of our father Abraham, peace be upon him, and friendship towards their friend and disavowal of their enemy.

Oh Lord, I have partaken of Your protection and Your beneficence. Bring to completion in me Your protection and beneficence.

Oh Lord God, I exist through You mornings and I exist through You evenings. Through You I am given life and through You I die. In You I put my trust and unto You is the resurrection.

There is no power and no strength save through God, the Lofty, the Awesome!"

* * *

On the basis of a sound transmission it has been related concerning our Shaikh that every day at dawn after the obligatory prayers he would recite twenty-one times:

"Oh Lord, confer blessings on me with regard to death and as for the hereafter, protect me from Hell-fire."

* * *

I have seen the following written in the hand of Abu'l-Barakāt-e Šeyk:

"I heard K^Vāja Esmā'il-e 'Abbās say: 'I heard Moḥammad, the Gnostic of Nowqān, who said: "I heard our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, God sanctify his awesome soul, say:

'It is recorded in Tradition that on Friday the Prophet, God's blessings and peace be upon him, between the midday and the afternoon prayers would perform ten rak'ats¹⁰ of prayer, with five "salaams" for each rak'at, one recitation of the Fāteḥa¹¹ and ten repetitions of "Say He is God alone!". When he was finished, he would recite one hundred times:

"God is sublime! Praise be to God! I seek forgiveness from God and turn to Him in repentance.""

* * *

Know that it was the practice of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, God sanctify his awesome soul, to recite the mealtime prayer at the end. And this is the prayer:

Prayers

"Oh Lord, give us blessings with regard to what we have had bestowed upon us and bestow upon us better still, and grant and confer upon us what we ask of You in the way of goodness and what we do not ask, and give us more from your vast bounty. Verily, we beseech You!"

**LETTERS OF OUR SHAIKH -- GOD SANCTIFY
HIS AWESOME SOUL! A FEW ARE HERE PRESENTED
FOR THE SAKE OF BLESSINGS:**

* * *

The Sultan Čağrı¹ had written a letter to our Shaikh which was delivered by K^Vāja Ḥammuya, the headman of Meyhana and a devotee of our Shaikh. Čağrı made a request of our Shaikh and sent K^Vāja Ḥammuya to look after the matter.

Our Shaikh wrote the following reply:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. May the Lord, great is His splendor and glory, keep the glorious commander, the victorious sovereign, under His protection and not abandon him to himself or to other creatures. May He bestow upon him whatever will bring him satisfaction and, through His generosity, hold him back from whatever has remorse for its consequence. By His grace and His mercy!

The letter of the magnificent, victorious commander -- God confer success on his good actions -- has arrived by the hand of K^Vāja Ḥammuya -- *God guide him rightly!* It has been read and its intention has been achieved.

Our excuses, which were clear, have been presented to him and he has understood them well and will transmit them himself and give further explanation. We hope they will be accepted.

May the Lord, *His name is glorious*, (likewise) make acceptable through His generosity the excuses of the magnificent commander, the victorious sovereign, and keep from him the afflictions of this world and the hereafter. And God grant him permanent success with whatever entails his well-being and salvation in this realm and the realm to come. *By His grace and His generosity!*

Verily, He is close by and gives response. Praise be to Allah alone. He has no partners. And blessings be upon Moḥammad and upon his family."

* * *

During the time that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was in Nishapur, a darvish came before the Shaikh and said: "I am about to set out for Meyhana."

The Shaikh asked for an inkstand and paper and said: "Wait one moment, while I write a word to Bu Ṭāher."

Then he wrote:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The peace of God, the Kind, the Omniscient, be upon the big and the little, and He has the power to overcome all of them together, if He wishes. Peace!"

And he gave the letter to the darvish who departed and took it with him.

* * *

A darvish said to our Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, I am going to Marv al-Rud. Is there any service I can render?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Wait, while I write something to Qāzi Ḥoseyn."

He wrote:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

*I look at her and she knows what's in my heart.
She looks at me and I know what she desires.*

Peace!"

* * *

At the request of an esteemed preacher our Shaikh wrote the following to a person of importance:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The peace of God, He is exalted, be upon the learned Master, as well as His mercy and His blessings. This most accomplished preacher, may God perpetuate his learning, is one of the people of the House of religious science and excellence.

Letters

He has set out for your abode and seeks your proximity with a view to enjoying the shade of your benediction.

We hope that by displaying your kindness toward him and providing for him out of your generosity and beneficence, you will accommodate him with a place appropriate to those like him.

Peace!"

* * *

The preacher of Azjāh wrote something to our Shaikh and the Shaikh replied:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The letter of the most learned preacher and man of letters has arrived -- God perpetuate its excellence! And may God grant him success in everything which brings him closer to Him in religion and in the world, in the hereafter and what precedes it.

As for the soundness of faith and the pure affection which he contains in his heart, the letter has revealed it all. Nor is there wonder that it is so, when the hearts behold one another and the inner consciences perceive one another by means of Truth's light. May God perpetuate his life and protect him from evils!

With regard to the matter of the deceased woman, may God illuminate her tomb and bring joy to her heart by the vision of His face. On behalf of her departure I will recite these verses which, though they are brief, say much:

*If every woman were like the one we've lost,
Then womankind would be superior to men."*

* * *

In Nishapur K^vāja Imam Moḥammad b. ‘Abdollāh b. Yusof al-Joveyni² went over to the mercy of God -- *He is exalted!* By way of condolence our Shaikh wrote a letter from Meyhana to the notables of Nishapur:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. God's peace, He is exalted, be upon the eminent leaders, as well as His mercy and His blessings.

Asrār al-Towḥid

*We say: 'Verily, we belong to God and unto Him we shall return.'*³

And then: 'Verily, we belong to God and unto Him we shall return.'

– being content with His decree, in submission to His judgement, and extinguished under His wrath.

Peace!"

* * *

While our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, God sanctify his awesome soul, was in Nishapur, a darvish, wearing traveling shoes, came before the Shaikh and said: "I am going to Meyhana. Is there any service I may perform?"

The Shaikh replied: "Wait, while I write something for my children."

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

No artist laboring a hundred years,
Can match the marvels born from one spring rain.

Wear a smiling face and an affable mien. Inevitably guests will continue to arrive.

Peace!"

* * *

Our Shaikh wrote the following letter from Meyhana to the jurist Abu Bakr-e Kaṭib in Marv:

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The memory of the unique, distinguished scholar, God perpetuate his power, his victory, and his steadfastness in obedience, is constantly present in our thoughts and prayers. We are never forgetful of him, or his offspring and dependents -- God perpetuate their repose!

We beseech God, *His name is glorious*, to keep you and all your family in His care, and to provide for your affairs in this world and the world to come, and to grant you what is best and most excellent, and not to abandon you to yourself and to the

Letters

realm of creation -- through *His generosity. Verily, He is the best to ask!*

Favors from the unique, distinguished scholar, *God perpetuate his success and right guidance*, have constantly reached us, and we have had much pleasure in them. We are desirous to see you and hope to do so soon.

Please receive our greetings and salutations on behalf of yourself, your children, and your friends, whoever they be, the great and the small -- *if God so wills! He is awesome and magnificent.*

And Ḥasan al-Mo'addeb will bestow upon you abundant greetings -- may God perpetuate your renown!

Praise be to God, and upon His Prophet Moḥammad and upon the Prophet's family, peace! God is our sufficiency and the best of protectors!"

**SCATTERED VERSES WHICH HAVE PASSED
OUR SHAIKH'S LIPS -- GOD SANCTIFY HIS AWESOME
SOUL!**

* * *

And the first of these verses our Shaikh recited is the following:

My love, there is no thorn in Kābarān¹
That has not lashed my flesh and destiny.
But I would meet with no blame if I gave my life
To your beauty and grace one hundred thousand times.

* * *

I have my spies where you reside who tell me
Whether you are true to me or have broken our trust

* * *

Beyond this world, another world we know,
A place beyond Hell-fire and Paradise.
Our stock-in-trade is love and drunkenness.
Scripture and fasting, that's another world.

* * *

This dish of curds and wheys, this humble relish,
Will do for me, whether freshly cooked or left over.
The glory of governorship cannot match in worth
The lowliness of dismissal, even should
Your authority extend from Čāč² to Medina.

* * *

I strove so hard to catch a sign of the loved one
That speculation merged with certainty
And certainty was lost in speculation.
But neither in fantasy nor certainty
Did there appear someone devoid of signs

Whom I could rightly indicate through signs.
For a time I played the lover, imagining
That I'd won fame since I was such and she thus.
When I saw in truth, she wasn't even there
As a fantasy. The lover and beloved
Was I. Just look how strange this story is!

* * *

Whatever heart your lordliness glances on
Wins stature, even though it were humble and low.
If it were only the small twig of a plant
And you should look at it, it would be a cypress
Of Ġātfar³. Whatever heart hides its aspiration
Beneath the seven layers of the earth,
Should you but look at it, its aspiration
Will be higher (in the heavens) than God's Throne.

* * *

On the path of Oneness there's no religion or unbelief.
Take a step outside yourself, and behold the road!
My love, my life, you choose the road of Islam.
Sit with a black snake but sit not with the Self.

* * *

One day our Shaikh looked at the tree which stands by his
sanctified sepulchral shrine. The tree's leaves were yellow. He re-
cited:

Your face is yellow, just as my face is yellow.
And you are so because of the season's moon,
While I am so out of love for a moon-faced beauty.

* * *

On one occasion, the chanter sang this verse before our
Shaikh:

I became an idolater before the beloved,
For this beloved has a fairy-like face.

Verses

She causes prophethood, doesn't deal with trifles.

Our Shaikh said: "*I take refuge with God!* You mustn't recite it that way. You should recite it like this:

She gives you non-being, doesn't deal with trifles."

* * *

And one day the singer sang this verse before our Shaikh:

You're no companion of mine, take your road and go.
May you meet with happiness and I with misfortune.

Our Shaikh said: "You mustn't recite it that way. You should recite it like this:

May you meet with happiness and I be light-hearted."

* * *

Our Shaikh said: "This evening Ebrāhim⁴ recited:

There was I and she and she and I. What joy!"

Then the Shaikh said: "That way there are three or four persons on hand. That's quite unpleasant. You should recite it like this:

Oh, I was she and she was I. What joy!"

* * *

Our Shaikh recited:

Do you want to become a somebody? Then renounce
Your own existence. Eliminate drunkenness,
If you have not yet drunk the wine of union.
Stop reaching for the locks of lovely idols.
What sin is there on the lovely idol's part?
Now you stop practicing idolatry!

* * *

He recited:

When your ringlets became king, your cheeks a throne,
My heart installed itself before your throne.
One day you will see me slaughtered by destiny,
My neck held tightly in the chains of your tresses.

* * *

He recited:

I want to grasp your locks of ambergris,
To paint with kisses your jasmine-petal skin.
Whatever earth you once set your foot upon,
I will bow a thousand times before its dust.
I will kiss a thousand times your letter's ribbon,
If I see your signet's been pressed into its seal.
They shall not sever my hand with an Indian sword⁵,
If I reach out one day and grasp your sleeve.
Though I'm a silent man, when its time for verse,
My tongue grows fluent⁶ singing aloud your praise.

* * *

He recited:

Since I beheld you, my candle of Ṭarāz⁷,
I have ceased all work, keep not the fast, nor pray.
With you my figurative speech becomes prayer.
Apart from you my prayer becomes a mere figure.

* * *

He recited:

*Be content with sufficiency and you'll be happy.
Desire no more than what is adequate.
In plain bread without condiments and clear water
There's sufficiency and everything you need.*

Verses

*All forms of ornament enhance a man
But the fairest ornament is chastity.*

* * *

He recited:

*For your sake I now love the Jews, one and all.
Indeed, I have almost become a Jew myself.
I pray but change my qebla to yours on purpose.
Look at my prayers so that you may testify.
Thanks to your love, I am guided in my prayers
By the Torah of Moses as well as Aḥmad's⁸ Qor'ān.
Were it not for secret enemies and their spite,
I would worship with those who worship on Saturday.
To enter the flames of Hell is easy in love,
As long as the one we desire is compliant in love.*

* * *

Imam Esmā'il-e Sāvi has said: "I wrote a letter to Shaikh Bu Sa'id and in it I wrote: 'Someone has spoken ill of you behind your back. Pardon him.'

In his own blessed handwriting the Shaikh wrote a reply on the back of the letter:

*The clouds of separation withdrew from love's moon.
The light of peace dispersed the darkness of quarrels.
And gently blows the breeze of apologies.
Up from the heart, love's pardon meets the breeze.*

* * *

He recited:

*To one side a lion, and on the other a sword.
And my poor heart between a lion and a sword.*

* * *

He recited:

All has turned out just as it should turn out.
This is the state of joy. You must now rejoice.
Why be sad or entertain long troubled thoughts?
Your own good fortune will achieve what must be.
The counsel of your veziers has no part to play.
Whatever is right, your own destiny ordains.
The wheel of heaven will bring no replacement for you,
And she who bore you will bear no other like you.
Indeed, God never closes a door to you
Without opening a hundred others far better.

* * *

He recited:

Where you're not required, it seems you don't appear.
Where you are required, you rise up from the ground.
You kill⁹ the lover and seek the lover's goal.
Oh here, indeed, is bounty, grace and beauty!

* * *

He recited:

Oh wine-pourer bring forth the cause of happiness,
Wine such as shines like the crown of king Qobād¹⁰,
Wine with a rose's scent and a tulip's cheek --
The bolt across sorrow's door, the key to joy!

* * *

He recited:

She becomes happy, when I'm weighed down with grief.
For her to be happy, I must suffer sorrow.
When I break into tears, she laughs for joy.
When I'm crestfallen, she increases flirtations.

* * *

He recited:

Verses

People pray toward the sun, a stone, a piece of wood.
But I pray, as of now, toward her beauteous face.

* * *

He recited:

In blackest night, from your face you lift the veil.
The blind man sees and finds the road again.
I cannot wait for fifty days to see you.
My love, my king, change fifty days to five.
Neither five nor fifty, I want to see you now!
A helpless stranger¹¹, I'm confused and lost.

* * *

He recited:

Wherever you are, there is no trace of sorrow.
Wherever you are not, no hearts rejoice.
Whoever hasn't been separate from you one moment,
His joy is no less great than heaven and earth.

* * *

Our Shaikh wrote out this quatrain in his own blessed handwriting:

*Should the passage of days cause us to separate,
Through our heart's closeness we'd remain united.
My intense love has made you take form in my heart
And your person is everywhere raised up before me.*

* * *

He recited:

Oh my love, I have completely changed into you.
By God, these words contain no arts or deceit.
If you escaped from your own existence,
My idol, I'd be left behind in your place.

* * *

He recited:

Oh giver of sweet replies, I will not hide
The love I bear for you. My love for you
Is evident. It's been brought out in the open.

* * *

He recited:

If the Now Ruz festival can't be called Mehragān¹²,
How can the sun be called a human being?
Joyfully may I live with a face like the idol's.
Joyfully live every man who's worthy of joy.

* * *

He recited:

As many... as are...,
As many fruit trees as are in Marv al-Rud¹³,
As many stars as are on the sky's blue wheel,
So much peace and praise from us be upon the beloved!

* * *

He recited:

What springs up is different from what's tied on.¹⁴

* * *

He recited:

I say no to sadness of heart and to the sad.
I harbor no esteem for the sad at heart.

Verses

* * *

He recited:

I am irked when a certain two words are uttered idly.
Two momentous words are abused by idle speech.
One is beautiful applied to all the good-looking
The other is lover applied to the common lover.
I am irked when any but I call you beautiful.
I am irked when any but your slave is called lover.

* * *

The following was recited in our Shaikh's presence:

Concordance, sweet temperament, less bile.
Let the love between us be unshakeable.

Our Shaikh said: "You should recite it like this:

Concordance, sweet temperament, no bile.
Let the love between us be without a twist."

* * *

He recited:

Man's suffering comes from increase and high rank.
Peace and security come from indigence.
Choose dearth and lowliness within the world,
If you're attached to intelligence and wisdom.

* * *

These are the verses which passed the Shaikh's blessed lips
when he was speaking.

BOOK THREE

CONCERNING THE END OF OUR SHAIKH'S LIFE AND THIS CONSISTS OF THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER ONE: ON THE SHAIKH'S FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH.

CHAPTER TWO: ON THE SHAIKH'S DEATH AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES THEREOF.

CHAPTER THREE: ON THE MIRACLES, SOME OF WHICH THE SHAIKH HAD PREDICTED WHILE ALIVE -- AND THEY CAME TO VIEW AFTER HIS DEATH -- AND OTHERS WHICH HE HAD NOT INDICATED BUT, BY WAY OF THE MIRACULOUS, PEOPLE SAW AFTER HIS DEATH.

* * *

CHAPTER ONE

ON THE SHAIKH'S RECOMMENDATIONS NEAR AND AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH.

* * *

At the end of his life when death was drawing near to our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, he said: "I have been informed as follows: 'These people who come here, see you. Now We are going to take you away, so that the people who come here, will see Us.'

'This affair'¹ has sprung up out of the ground. Whether I am here or not, 'this affair' will persist until the resurrection."

* * *

At the end of his life our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said: "Kānaqāhs will arise and wearers of the patched frock will grow numerous. However, these men will act as a veil².

The people at large will look and see them all as one and know them as one. Meanwhile, 'this community' will be hidden and the people will have no dealings with them."

* * *

My grandfather, Šeyk al-Eslām K^vāja Bu Sa'd-e Šeyk, has said: "Toward the end of his life our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, spoke before an assembly every day for a period of one year. During the assembly he would say: 'Oh Muslims, a dearth of God is coming.'

At the end of his farewell assembly -- after which he never held an assembly again -- he turned to the group and said: 'If tomorrow you are asked who you are, what will you answer?'

They asked: 'What does the Shaikh command?'

The Shaikh replied: 'Do not say we are true believers! Do not say we are Sufis! Do not say we are Muslims! For whatever you say, they will ask you for proof and you will be unable to provide it. Say: "We are subordinates. Our chiefs are ahead of us. Take us before our chiefs, for the answer of the subordinate is with his chief."

Endeavor to reach your chiefs, for if you are abandoned unto yourselves, how many foul and ignominious deeds on your part will be brought to light!"

* * *

One day K^vāja Bu Maṣṣūr-e Varqāni, who was Sultan Ṭoğrel's³ vezier, came before the Shaikh and said: "Give me a word of advice."

Our Shaikh replied:

"The first halting station of God's servants is respect for the Divine Decree, and the final halting station of prophethood is respect for the rights of the true believers."

Today your task is to accomplish the rights of the people. Keep your eye fixed on the following Tradition, so that tomorrow it may give you assistance, for the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, has said:

Book Three, Chapter One

'None of you shall enter Paradise unless he has compassion for the generality of mankind, the same way each of you has compassion for those who are special to you.'

All these people are the children of your good fortune. Look upon them all as your own offspring. Do not be deceived by the vanities of this world and the multitude of the people, for men are slaves of their own needs.

If you satisfy their needs, they will accept you, even though you have many faults. If you do not take care of their needs, they will not pay attention to you, even though you have many virtues."

* * *

At the end of his life our Shaikh turned to his group of devotees and, by way of recommendation, said: "You must busy yourselves serving the poor and you must gird your waist in their service.

The children must not play, the young men must not perform feats of wonder, and the old men must not indulge in bigotry and hypocrisy.

The science of this world and the world to come has been expressed in these words:

*'Verily, we belong to God, and unto Him we shall return.'*⁴

A dearth of God has come! A dearth of God has come! A dearth of God has come!

Look at me, for 'this matter'⁵ has come to an end with me!"

And he passed his hand over his face⁶ and brought the assembly to a close.

* * *

During his farewell assembly our Shaikh said: "In my childhood I learned the Qor'ān before Bu Moḥammad-e 'Annāzi. When I had learnt it completely, I was told: 'You must study with a tutor of letters.'

I said to my teacher: 'Give me your pardon.'

He replied: 'You must give me your pardon, and learn these words in memory of me:

"If during only the blinking of an eye you attend to God, you gain more wealth than all the sun shines over."

That is to say, if your thought is with God even one moment, it is better than the whole world.

And I give you this same recommendation. Do not be absent from God!"

.....

Then he said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Oh Ḥasan, rise to your feet!"

Ḥasan stood up and the Shaikh said: "Know that I did not call you unto myself. I called you unto your own non-being. I said: 'His existence is enough. You He has created for non-being.'

Though a person presented the religious devotion of all men and the Jinn⁷ as well, it would not be equal to bringing comfort to someone.

And the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, said to the Companions by way of recommendation:

'Model yourselves on the traits of God.'

I say the same to you. Follow the path of God. Look at everyone through God. Do not look away from God to creation, for:

'Whoever looks upon God's creatures with a creature's eye, his quarrel with them will be long. But whoever looks upon creatures with the eye of the Truth, will experience peace with regard to them.'

* * *

During his farewell assembly our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, turned to K^vāja Ḥammuya, who was the headman of Meyhana, and said: "Oh K^vāja, you have been called Ḥammuya so that you would protect⁸ the people. Look after God's creatures and pay attention to my affairs, for I will be brought here on Friday and it will be my market day⁹ and crowds will be on

Book Three, Chapter One

hand that day, both of those who are visible and those who are invisible.

You must preserve your faith and endeavor to bear me from the house to my tomb in one move. Indeed, a steep pass lies ahead."

KVāja-ye Najjār asked: "Oh Shaikh, who are those who are invisible?"

Our Shaikh replied: "Oh Aḥmad, know that I have met three persons from among the successors to the Prophet, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, who were made caliph over the Jinn: 'Amr, Baḥr, and 'Aqab. Moreover, 'Aqab and I were companions. And after my death 'Aqab will reside at my tomb until the time of his death. He will not be absent except on the Day of 'Arafa and the Feast of the Sacrifice¹⁰.

A great number of Jinn has experienced refreshment through my discourse, both in Nishapur as well as here. They grew accustomed to my words. They stood in attendance during the *samā'*¹¹ of the darvishes, and when the darvishes and you perform the *samā'* at my tomb, they shall be on hand.

Observe what is their due in all sincerity. And in your houses burn wild rue every night because the infidel Jinn flee from the smell of wild rue, and at the hour of the afternoon prayers order that the house be swept and that all uncleanness be exchanged for purity.

If at the time of my death you hear a voice but you do not see anyone, know it is they.

And know that I have departed but I have left you four things as a legacy: sweeping, washing, searching, and discussing.¹² As long as you persist in these four things, water will flow in your channel and the sowing field of your religion will be green and flourishing, and you will be looked upon with admiration by the people.

Strive that you omit nothing of these four principles, for it is the end of the era. Nothing remains and what had remained, is gone as well. This task has come to an end with me. I have completed one thousand months. Beyond a thousand there is no reckoning¹³.

'Verily, we belong to God and unto Him we shall return.'^{14"}

* * *

During this assembly our Shaikh also said: "Bring paper and an inkstand."

These were brought and the Shaikh, pointing to Abu'l-Hasan-e A'raj-e Abivardi, who was his secretary, said: "Write the following:

'In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Abu Ṭāher Sa'id b. Faẓlollāh -- may God render him pure, make him happy and give him excellence, through His generosity and favor, through His assistance and His support. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-Vafā' Moẓaffar b. Faẓlollāh -- may God give him victory and support, guide him rightly, gladden him, and make him firm. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-'Alā' Nāṣer b. Faẓlollāh -- God give him help and victory, support him, make him glad, and give him refinement and insight. And there is no power save in God!

Abu 'Ali al-Moṭahhar b. Faẓlollāh -- God raise him aloft, give him purity and relief, assist him, refine him, and make him glad. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-Baqā' al-Mofazzal b. Faẓlollāh -- may God perpetuate his life and give him excellence above the greater part of His creatures. And there is no power save in God!

The offspring of Abu Ṭāher:

Abu'l-Faṭḥ Ṭāher b. Sa'id -- God give inspiration through him, from him, and by means of everything he has. And there is no power save in God!

Abu Sa'd As'ad b. Sa'id -- God grant him happiness, give him support and honor, and guide him rightly. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-'Ezz al-Movaffaq b. Sa'id -- God grant him success and assistance, give him support, make him glad and guide him rightly. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-Faraj al-Faẓl b. Aḥmad al-'Āmeri -- may God bestow joy from him, by means of him, and through him. And there is no power save in God!

Abu'l-Fotuḥ Mas'ud b. al-Faẓl -- God give him happiness and excellence, and grant him inspiration and strength. And there is no power save in God!"

* * *

Then the Shaikh said: "These are the ten persons who as long as one of them remains after me, there will continue to be spiritual vestiges and mystic searching. Once they have all hidden their faces under the earth, 'this higher meaning' will be hidden from men at large."

And then he said:

"Verily, we exist through Him and for His sake."

* * *

When our Shaikh had said these words during this assembly, he lowered his head for a moment. Then he raised his head. Tears were flowing down the Shaikh's dear face and all those present wept. Our Shaikh said: "My heart's beseeching asked God how long this higher meaning would remain. The answer came: 'A scented whiff of this higher meaning will remain among men one hundred years. After that neither whiff nor vestige will remain.

If spiritual meaning exists anywhere, it will cover its face with a veil and mystic searching will cease."

.....

And we beheld with our own eyes that after one hundred years the import of the Shaikh's words came true, just as he had indicated.

In that very month the beginnings of disorder and upheaval appeared which eventually reached the point where, for some time, people could not visit the sanctified sepulchral shrine in Meyhana. They would go and pay their respects at a place called Sar Kolah, two *farsangs*¹⁵ away at the foot of the mountain. This is in accordance with the import of the Shaikh's blessed words spoken one day during an assembly: "The time will come when people will not be able to enter Meyhana in order to make a pilgrimage to me. They will come in secret to Sar Kolah and pay their respects to me."

And during the hundred year period concerning which the Shaikh said: "I will be the custodian", the following was never lacking: the five ritual prayers in congregation, food served mornings and at night, every morning a recital of the whole Qor'ān at his sanctified tomb, candles every evening until bedtime and ev-

ery dawn until daylight, providing Qorʿānic reciters morning and evening, and a group of Sufis resident at his sanctified tomb amounting to more than one hundred persons from among his offspring and devotees.

Nor was there any laxity or interruption in this whatsoever but every day spiritual inspiration, relief and bounty would appear once again. And every year men of distinction would come to this generous Presence¹⁶ from all over the world and the *samāʿ* was continually performed and robes were thrown off in ecstasy. Whoever experienced some difficulty on the mystic path, would have it solved by this lofty Presence or by his offspring. Moreover, the venerable reputation, bounty and affluence which his offspring -- as well as secondarily the people of Meyhana -- enjoyed during these hundred years, could not be pointed to by anyone in any other place. And so it turned out in accordance with the Shaikh's blessed words: "The time is coming when what weighs one dirhem, will become a *satir*¹⁷, and what amounts to a *satir*, will become a *mann*, and what amounts to a *mann*, will become an ass-load, and what is an ass-load, will become a storehouse.

That is to say, my lordliness will become such that no whiff of 'this affair'¹⁸ will remain -- I mean of poverty! Then, indeed, what comes to pass, will come to pass. And that time will be when one hundred years have elapsed."

.....

In that very month none of these vestiges were left and of his offspring and devotees only a small number remained at his sanctified tomb. All the rest had been martyred at the hands of the Ğozz¹⁹, in a manner which cannot be described. A group of them went into exile in different parts of the world and, while in exile, they all passed over to the mercy of God -- *He is sublime and exalted!*

Now for a period of thirty-four years nothing of those provisions which were mentioned before, has been carried out at his sanctified tomb and there is still no light to be seen.

Two things give us hope. One is what passed our Shaikh's blessed lips, that: "After five hundred years or so someone like me but not like me, will appear on my behalf and through him this work will come alive again."

And the other is what my father, Nur al-Din-e Monavvar, God have mercy upon him, has reported:

Book Three, Chapter One

"I heard KVāja Bu'l-Fath-e Šeyk say that our Shaikh had said: 'I will be the custodian for one hundred years and my offspring will be so for another hundred years. And this will last for one thousand years.'"

And it has been reported that 'Abd al-Karim, who was our Shaikh's personal servant, said that our Shaikh declared: "It will last right up until the resurrection."

On the basis of these two happy indications we hope that at the end of our life we may attain the felicity of experiencing, for some few days, repose at that sanctified tomb and that our death will occur in that noble sanctuary and our grave will be near our ancestors and forefathers.

Oh Lord God, give us sustenance through Your bounty, Your generosity, and Your mercy – oh Living and Everlasting One, oh Possessor of magnificence and nobility, oh most Merciful of those who show mercy!

* * *

During this assembly our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, turned to KVāja 'Abd al-Karim and said: "This youth wished to travel the mystic path to the end but oh child, keep your steps here where you have arrived. Do not strive after more, for you will not attain it²⁰."

* * *

During this assembly our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, also turned to his eldest son, KVāja Bu Ṭāher, and said: "Oh Bu Ṭāher, rise to your feet!"

KVāja Bu Ṭāher stood up. The Shaikh took hold of his robe and drew him towards himself. The Shaikh said: "I have consecrated you and your offspring to the service of the darvishes. Pay attention to this advice of mine:

Do you wish to bring love to its consummation?

Oh how much you must be pleased with what's unpleasant!

You must look upon the ugly and deem it fair.

You must swallow poison and imagine that it's sugar."²¹

Then he said: "Do you accept?"

Bu Ṭāher replied: "I accept."

Our Shaikh said: "Let those who are present inform whoever is absent that K^vāja Bu Ṭāher is the Pivot²². Look upon him as one of the great spiritual men.

The Sufis have had two k^vājas²³, one is K^vāja ‘Ali-ye Ḥasan²⁴ in Kermān and the other is K^vāja ‘Ali-ye Kabbāz²⁵ in Marv.

The third k^vāja of the Sufis is K^vāja Bu Ṭāher. And after him there will not be a k^vāja of the Sufis again."

.....

At the time of his death, this was a part of what passed our Shaikh's blessed lips in the form of recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCERNING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH OF OUR SHAIKH ABU SA'ID -- GOD SANCTIFY HIS AWESOME SOUL!

* * *

On Friday, the 27th of the month of Rajab, in the year 440¹ our Shaikh spoke before an assembly. At the end, by way of bringing the assembly to a close, he recited the following verses:

"Alas! I must set out down the open road.
And now this couch of love must be folded up."

Then he said to Kṽāja 'Aliyak who was from Nishapur and one of our Shaikh's devotees: "Rise to your feet!"

Kṽāja 'Aliyak stood up and the Shaikh said: "You must set out for Nishapur at once. You will take three days going and three days to return and you will remain there half a day, so that Thursday towards the noon-day prayer you will be back here. In Nishapur give my greetings to Māmān, the coppersmith, and tell him: 'The Shaikh says to offer him the linen cloth you have put aside for the hereafter.'"

'Aliyak set out immediately. Meanwhile, the Sufis were disturbed until Monday morning, the first day of the month of Ša'bān², when the Shaikh, during an assembly, made his final recommendations.

.....

During that same assembly the Shaikh turned to Kṽāja 'Abd al-Karim and said: "While I lived, you looked after the matter of my ablutions and were in attendance upon me in the bathhouse. When I die, you will also bear this charge.

Let there be no fault in washing my body. Be of assistance to Ḥasan and pay attention that no mistake occurs. And observe the rules and customs because I am protected³ and if any customary practice is omitted, I will indicate it."

.....

When he had made all these recommendations and brought the assembly to a close, he came down from the raised platform and said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: "Saddle a horse for me!"

The Shaikh's horse was saddled and brought. The Shaikh mounted up and made a tour around Meyhana. He bade farewell to every place and locality and tree, and he bade farewell to all the places where he had spent time on retreat and performed religious devotions.

Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has said: "I was walking in attendance on the Shaikh's stirrup and thinking to myself how after the Shaikh's death I would perform such-and-such a service and arrange things this or that way. And my heart was greatly concerned over the debts.

I was thinking about these matters, when the Shaikh reined in his horse and turning to me, said:

'Oh you, who are as skilful with my heart,
As Ahvāzi⁴ is skilful at playing chess!
Once I'm checkmated, the game is over for you.'

I was thrown into confusion. The Shaikh said: 'Oh Ḥasan, don't trouble your heart over the debts, for Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā is coming. He will arrive three days after my death and set your heart free from the debts.'"

And both things turned out as the Shaikh had predicted. After our Shaikh's death Kvāja Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb was never able to be of service. Kvāja Bu Ṭāher and his children took care of the dar-vishes after our Shaikh's death. And this was as the Shaikh had indicated.⁵

Three days after our Shaikh's death Dust-e Dādā arrived from Ġaznin and paid off the Shaikh's debts. And that story will be presented in its proper place.

.....

Our Shaikh then returned to his house and having dismounted, went inside and became somewhat ill. And the Shaikh's devotees and his offspring were constantly with him.

Our Shaikh was asked: "Oh Shaikh, what verse of the Qor'ān should be recited before your bier?"

Our Shaikh replied: "That would be too grand an affair. Recite the following verses before my bier:

Book Three, Chapter Two

What was more pleasing in the world than when
The lover went with lover, the friend with friend.
The rest was only grief, while that was all joy.
The rest was only talk, while that was all deed."

Thus, the day the Shaikh's bier was carried forth from his house, the Qor'ānic reciters, in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, intoned those verses.

Also on that day our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was asked: "Should we inscribe on your tombstone: '*God bears witness*'⁶, and the verse of the Throne, or: '*Blessed be He*'⁷?"

Our Shaikh replied: "That is too lofty an affair. Inscribe the following verses:

*I ask you, or rather I advise, when I've died,
Inscribe upon my tombstone: 'Here lies one
Enthralled to love'. Perhaps some distressed soul,
Familiar with the ways of love, will pass
And offer greetings at this exile's grave.*

And Kosayyer composed these verses on behalf of 'Azza, which you ought to inscribe:

*I swear, oh 'Azza, by Him Whose slave I am,
By Him Who is honored by the pilgrims at Mecca
And all that fills the plains of 'Arafāt.
I desire no other beloved apart from you.
But trust what I say; the noble are trustworthy.
If I were under earth and you should call,
I'd answer your voice, though bones were turned to dust.
Oh enticer, when I think of you, my liver
Is cut to shreds and my sorrows multiply."*⁸

After the Shaikh's death both these poems were inscribed on the Shaikh's tombstone in three lines, each line containing two beyts⁹.

.....

Two days before our Shaikh's death the following words passed his blessed lips, when all his devotees and children were seated in front of him. Our Shaikh turned to them and said:

"God's benefaction remains unknown as long as it is being received but once it is absent, it is recognized."

The last words our Shaikh said to his children and his devotees were these: "Be on your guard not to cause harm to the inner seat of men's faith."

.....

KVāja 'Abd al-Karim has related:

"On Friday, toward the hour of the noonday prayers, the Shaikh opened his eyes and asked KVāja Bu Ṭāher: 'Has 'Aliyak come?'

Bu Ṭāher replied: 'He has not.'

The Shaikh closed his eyes. I rose to my feet and went outside. 'Aliyak arrived. I went to the door of the house and said to KVāja Bu Ṭāher: "Aliyak has come and has brought the linen cloth.'

KVāja Bu Ṭāher repeated this to the Shaikh. The Shaikh opened his eyes and asked KVāja Bu Ṭāher: 'What did you say?'

KVāja Bu Ṭāher said once more: "Aliyak has come and has brought the linen cloth.'

The Shaikh said: *'Praise be to God, the Lord of Creation!'*

.....

And his breathing stopped Friday evening toward the hour of the bedtime prayers, the fourth day of Ša'bān, in the year 440¹⁰.

A cry of lamentation arose from the garden and from within the Shaikh's house, such that it was heard all throughout Meyhana and since the Shaikh had predicted this, it was known that these were the Jinn¹¹. In the midst of the clamor these words were heard: 'Alack, alas, you have gone! You have taken it away and left nothing behind for mankind!'

And they went on like this until midnight. At dawn we performed the ritual washing of the Shaikh, for the Shaikh had said: 'Make a cover for my lower body with half this piece of linen and wrap my shoulders in the other half. Then roll me up in my blanket. And do no more than that.'"

KVāja 'Abd al-Karim has related:

"When we laid the Shaikh on his winding sheet, KVāja Bu Ṭāher and all the Shaikh's offspring were present, and I was standing by the Shaikh's feet. When I looked at the Shaikh, he opened

his eyes and with the index finger of his right hand he pointed at his thigh. This he did in such a way that all those present saw.

I looked and saw that I had not drawn up over him one corner of the loincloth. The Shaikh's thigh was exposed on one side which is indecent. I immediately took care of the matter.

Moreover, this is what the Shaikh had meant when he said: 'Be careful to observe the rules and customs, because I am protected and if anything is omitted, I will indicate it.'

I had omitted something and he had pointed it out."

.....

When the sun rose, they brought the Shaikh out of his room, said prayers over him, and lifted up the bier to carry it from the door of the Shaikh's house to his sepulchral shrine. But the bier remained suspended in the air until the hour midway between dawn and noon. As hard as the people exerted themselves, it would not go forward.

Then K^Vāja-ye Najjār said to K^Vāja Ḥammuya: "What did the Shaikh command you to do? Now is the time to do it."

In accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, K^Vāja Ḥammuya picked up a stick and began driving off the people, so that with much effort they carried the bier to the sepulchral shrine and it was buried.

.....

One of the miracles which I witnessed in this connection, was the following. There was a raised platform with a separate stool placed in front of it -- like a base -- for the Shaikh to stand on in order to reach the top. This platform was so high, it was impossible to get onto it from the ground without a base. And from this platform the Shaikh spoke before assemblies in Meyhana.

When the Shaikh died, the ritual washing of his body was performed on this platform in his cell of seclusion, which is in his house opposite his sepulchral shrine. And the platform was never moved from that place where our Shaikh had been washed.

Every time, however, that the cell of seclusion underwent repair and they plastered the ground with *arzak*¹² and plastered underneath the platform, the very moment they stopped work, all the plaster would sink into the ground and wet earth would rise to the surface. And this they experienced repeatedly.

One day they made the spot firm with plaster and *arzak* several times in a row but just as before it immediately sank into the ground and wet earth rose to the top.

The area of ground which had been reached by water from the Shaikh's ablutions, never again became solid.

.....

And another miracle was the following. When the Shaikh died, the base of the raised platform, as well as the stool on which the Shaikh had performed his daily ablutions, were both placed on top of the raised platform, in that spot which has been mentioned. And people would make a pilgrimage to them.

This continued until the time of the interlude of the Ğozz¹³ who laid waste Meyhana and killed so many offspring and devotees of the Shaikh and exterminated the people of Meyhana. And whenever they found a door or something of wood, they burned it.

It was then that this raised platform and the two stools disappeared.

No one who had been among those taken prisoner by the Ğozz, had information about these three objects or said that he had seen this platform and the stools, either broken up or burned. When all the Shaikh's offspring and devotees, along with the people of Meyhana, men and women, young and old, were prisoners of the Ğozz – and most of them were in this neighborhood and in this house because they had taken refuge in the blessed sanctuary and they were constantly protecting and looking after this platform and the stools – they saw no trace of their having been broken up or burned.

The only indication they made was that one day toward the hour of the afternoon prayers they entered this house and saw that the platform and the stools were safe in the cell of seclusion, and the next day at dawn they went in and they didn't see anything.

God alone knows!

.....

During the calamity of the Ğozz several strange events came to pass in the very sanctuary itself. One from among them is the following.

When the martyred Sultan Sanjar¹⁴, the son of Malekšāh, *God illuminate his final resting place*, attained release from the Ğozz

Book Three, Chapter Two

and returned to the capital, this well-wisher went from Saraks to Marv along with a group of spritual masters, *qāzis* and religious leaders to congratulate the sultan on his arrival, and out of concern for the needs of the Shaikh's sanctuary. None of the Shaikh's kinsmen or offspring was with this well-wisher, for those who were left, were scattered abroad and most had gone to Iraq.

When this well-wisher arrived in Marv, the headman of Meyhana, *God have mercy on him*, had arrived a few days before on behalf of the needs of the province, but had still not seen the sultan. This was because at all times in the past only the Shaikh's offspring had the power to speak about the needs of the province. If anyone else spoke, he was not heard.

The headman, the tax collector, the prefect of police, and whoever was empowered to act in that province, could only act at the instruction of the Shaikh's offspring. And if anyone committed an injustice against somebody in that province, the chief and *pir* of the Shaikh's offspring only had to write: "So-and-so ought not to be in *Kābarān*¹⁵", and have someone deliver this letter to the military camp. As soon as the letter was presented to the sultan, a command would be written for that person's dismissal.

To be brief, when the headman learned of this well-wisher's arrival, he immediately came before me and, full of joy, he said: "I have been waiting for one of you for several days. Now that you have arrived, we will see the sultan tomorrow."

The following day both of us met with the sultan in private. When he beheld this well-wisher, he received me with respect. When we had sat down and this well-wisher had invoked God on his behalf, Sultan Sanjar, *God illuminate his final resting place*, said:

"Meyhana is a blessed place and there can be no tomb more venerable and esteemed than that of the Shaikh's. One of the *Ġozz* laid his hand on the tomb and was about to dig it up -- as was their practice, for in several places certain people who live for this base world, had shown them something in graves and they had dug them up and found riches. And he intended to dig up the tomb in the same way.

When he put his hand on the tomb, he immediately turned to stone. His kinsmen brought the stone back to the military camp and I saw this stone."

The well-wishing author has only heard this story from the mouth of Sultan Sanjar and no one else. *The responsibility lies with him!*

.....

Then the sultan ordered one thousand ass-loads of grain to be dispensed as sowing seed for Kābarān and one hundred ass-loads as seed for the fields of the sanctified sepulchral shrine. And the headman of Meyhana made a request for oxen. The sultan replied: "Khorasan has been laid waste and I have no storehouse. For now you must make do with this. Use part of it for hiring oxen and do part of the ploughing by pulling the plough with the chest.

However, give this fellow one hundred dinars in cash on behalf of the sepulchral shrine, so that he may spend part of it on oxen for the shrine's fields and part of it for building and providing meals."

This well-wisher took the gold, returned to Meyhana, and cultivated the fields. And I sent someone to the outlying areas to bring back all the Shaikh's offspring and devotees who were still alive. A body of fifty persons gathered together.

Meals, the five ritual prayers and complete recitations of the Qor'ān at the tomb, candles and Qor'ānic reciters -- all these practices flourished. Perfect illumination appeared and proper order was established. The well-wishing author consecrated himself entirely to this service and from all quarters venerable Sufis and foreigners set out for this eminent Presence and exalted spiritual states occurred.

But then Sultan Sanjar, *God have mercy on him*, departed from this world and Sultan Maḥmud¹⁶ ascended the throne. The battle with the Gozz at Dandānqān-by-Marv took place and once again the army of the sultan was defeated and put to flight, and the Gozz gained the upper hand. On this occasion the sanctuary was utterly destroyed and matters reached the point they reached.

May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, cause illumination to reappear through His generosity and through His nobility give assistance particularly to the people of this province and, in general, to the people of Khorasan. May He afford deliverance from the hand of oppressors and tyrants and out of His kindness bestow security, justice and prosperity on Khorasan and on the whole world -- *through His favor, His generosity, and His nobility!*

CHAPTER THREE

CONCERNING SOME OF THE SHAIKH'S MIRACLES WHICH APPEARED AFTER HIS DEATH. MENTION OF SOME OF THEM HAD PASSED HIS BLESSED LIPS WHILE HE WAS ALIVE. HE HAD PREDICTED THEM AND THEY CAME TO VIEW AFTER HIS DEATH. AND SOME HE HAD NOT PREDICTED BUT THEY WERE REVEALED WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME.

* * *

At the beginning of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's mystic career, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, there was an old woman who did the cooking in our Shaikh's house. She was called Dādā, the cook, and she had a son by the name of Bu Sa'd. Whenever his mother ordered him to do a task, she would say: "Ho, Dust-e Dādā¹! Do such-and-such a task."

One day at the hour of the midday nap the Shaikh had lain down in his cell of seclusion and all the Sufis had lain down in the mosque for the nap. The heat was exceptionally hot. Dādā was preparing something for the darvishes but there was no one to fetch water for her. She gave a pitcher to Bu Sa'd and said: "Ho, Dust-e Dādā! Fetch a pitcher of water, so that I may prepare something for the Shaikh and the Sufis."

Bu Sa'd took the pitcher and went to fetch the water. He was barefoot and the ground had become very hot. Bu Sa'd's little feet were burned and tears flowed from his eyes but carrying the pitcher on his back, he brought the water.

When he came through the door of the Shaikh's house, the Shaikh called out from within his cell of seclusion: "I have given Baghdad to Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā and to his offspring, in return for this pitcher of water he has brought."

After this people called him Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā, for the sake of blessings from the Shaikh's words.

.....

After this Bu Sa'd grew up in attendance upon the Shaikh and attained the rank of being one of the Shaikh's Ten Companions. There were ten persons from among his disciples whom the Shaikh called the Ten Companions. And he said: "The Prophet,

God's blessings and peace be upon him, had ten friends, whom he called the Ten Companions. God, He is magnificent and lofty, has also given me ten disciples as in the case of Moṣṭafā, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and has made them my Ten Companions."

And our Shaikh told each one to go to a particular place after the Shaikh's death and in that province they and their children became famous and became the leaders of "this mystic community" in the province. And through them "this mystic community" accomplished acts of the spirit and experienced moments of repose.

.....

Then, at the end of his life, the Shaikh one day summoned Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā and said: "I am unable to depart from this world because Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has debts on behalf of the Sufis, amounting to three thousand dinars. You must go to the city of Ġaznin² before the Sultan of Ġaznin and give him my greetings. Tell him there are debts of three thousand dinars and that he must free our heart of these. This is the reason why I am unable to leave the world."

Bu Sa'd has related:

"When the Shaikh said these words, the thought immediately entered my heart: 'How will I be able to tell this to the sultan. The sultan doesn't know me. Who will transmit this message to his ear?'

When this anxiety entered my heart, the Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu Sa'd, don't worry your heart. I have communicated this matter to him and he has accepted.'"

Bu Sa'd has said:

"I immediately put on my traveling shoes and came before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu Sa'd, bid me farewell, for you will not see me when you return. And take care that when you arrive back in Meyhana, you do not stay longer than three days. Go to Baghdad, for I have given Baghdad to you and your offspring as a fief.

Take care not to settle in any place except Baghdad. There through you much comfort and spiritual inspiration will be experienced by "this mystic community".'

I wept profusely and grasped the Shaikh's hand and fell at his feet. And having bid the Shaikh farewell, I went on to Ġaznin. When I reached the city gate of Ġaznin, I became anxious and per-

Book Three, Chapter Three

plexed as to how I would be able to see the sultan and tell him the message. I thought to myself: 'I must look for a mosque near the entrance to the sultan's palace and install myself in it. One of the sultan's courtiers will surely come there to pray and I will communicate the message to him, so that he may transmit it to the sultan's ear.'

With this thought in mind I entered the city and walked about aimlessly. I didn't know where I was going. When I had walked a good way, I came to a large neighborhood.

I set off into this neighborhood. When I had walked on a bit, there appeared in front of the street the door of a large and royal house such as might belong to kings and sultans. By the door of the house platforms had been set up and a large group of men with their arms joined to one another's waists, were standing there at attention.

When I appeared from a distance, this group opened a path for me. I saw a handsome servant seated upon the platform and when he caught sight of me, he rose to his feet and came before me. Embracing me, he said: 'Oh Shaikh, sit down here until I come outside.'

I sat down. He went into that palace and then immediately coming outside again, he said: 'Are you Shaikh Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā, the disciple of Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr from Meyhana?'

I replied: 'I am.'

He said: 'Rise and come inside.'

I stood up weeping, and went into the sultan's palace. I was amazed and wondered how these people knew me and whom they'd heard my name from and what business the sultan had with me.

The servant led me into the sultan's palace and then took me to a room. In that room I met the sultan by himself seated on a throne. I greeted him with 'salaam' and the sultan returned my greeting. He said: 'Are you Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā?'

I replied: 'Yes, I am.'

The sultan said: 'It is now forty days since I beheld Shaikh Bu Sa'id in a dream and I stationed this servant at the door of the palace in expectation of your arrival. The Shaikh has told me about the debts and I have agreed to pay them.'

Now may God reward you, for the Shaikh will be departing from the world.'

When I heard these words, I was overwhelmed and let out a cry. I wept profusely and so did the sultan. And he ordered the servant: 'Take him where he may remove his traveling shoes.'

I was taken to a room, also in the sultan's palace, that was decorated in a manner fit for sultans. Servants came and took my shoes and looked after me in a way worthy of a palace of kings.

That same day they sent me to the *ḥammām*³. And they sent handsome Sufi style clothes to the *ḥammām*. For three days they entertained me as a guest, nor could I have been treated more finely. At dawn on the fourth day the first servant came and said to me: 'The sultan summons you.'

I rose and went before the sultan. I was given three thousand dinars which had been weighed out and placed in something. The sultan said: 'This is for the Shaikh's debts.'

Then he gave me another thousand dinars and said: 'This is for the Shaikh's funerary banquet⁴ – that a funerary banquet may be held for the Shaikh at his tomb in my name.'

And he gave me another thousand dinars and said: 'This is for you, so that you may procure a pair of shoes for yourself. For you have come a long way.'

Then he said to the servant: 'Take him to the caravan of Khorasan which is leaving for Khorasan tomorrow and hire a mount for him as far as Khorasan and arrange the provisions for his journey, as required. And present him to the notables of this caravan and tell them: "I commit him to your protection. See that he reaches Khorasan in safety and be of service to him along the way."'

I bowed to the sultan and the sultan honored me and embraced me. The servant came with me and brought me to the caravan of Khorasan. He entrusted me to them, arranged my provisions for the journey and hired me a mount as far as Khorasan. Then he bade me farewell and departed.

I went on to Khorasan and I was as comfortable as could be along the way. And I set out for Meyhana, distressed and weeping because of the Shaikh's death. When I reached the outskirts of Meyhana, all the Shaikh's children and disciples and the Sufis came forth to meet me, in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions. The Shaikh had said to Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb: 'Three days after my death Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā will arrive from Ġaznin and he will free your heart from concern for the debts.'

And the day I arrived in Meyhana, was the morning of the fourth day after the Shaikh's death.

Book Three, Chapter Three

When they caught sight of me, they let out a cry and once again lamentation for the Shaikh was renewed and ecstatic states were experienced. I went to the Shaikh's tomb in their company and paid my respects. And in front of the group I related what had happened to me.

Then I placed before Kṽāja Bu Ṭāher the three thousand dinars for the Shaikh's debts, and said: 'This is for the Shaikh's debts.'

And I handed over the thousand dinars which had been given on behalf of the Shaikh's funerary banquet. I also placed before Kṽāja Bu Ṭāher the thousand dinars which had been given to me, and said: 'Spend this on a funerary banquet for the Shaikh in my name.'

I didn't keep anything for myself.

That day the debts were paid and the funerary banquet was held. And the following day a fine funerary banquet was held with the sultan's money and the third day a handsome banquet was held in my name. And the Shaikh's patched frock and the patched frocks of the group which had participated, were cut into pieces.

.....

On the fourth day, in accordance with the Shaikh's instructions, I decided to set out for Baghdad. I bade the Shaikh's offspring farewell and departed in the direction of Baghdad.

When I arrived in Baghdad -- at that time the flourishing settlement was on the other side of the river --, I stayed in a mosque. When I had rested a few days, I made it known to a friend that: 'I must build a hospice here for the Sufis and be of service to them.'

This person said: 'All the mosques are at your disposal. Go in to whichever mosque you wish and be of service.'

But if you want to build a kānaqāh on this side of the river, it will not be possible. Here all the people disapprove and you have no money or means.

The best thing for you to do is to write to the caliph and ask him for enough land on the other side of the river to build a hospice there.'

I wrote a letter to the Commander of the Faithful to the effect that:

'I intend to build a kānaqāh here for Sufis. I am a man from Khorasan, one of the disciples of Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr of Meyhana. I have come here to wait upon "this mystic commu-

nity". May the caliph grant me sufficient land on the other side of the river to build a hospice for "the mystic community".'

In his own handwriting the caliph replied:

'It is accorded unto him to take as much land on the other side of the river as he requires.'

I went and having filled my lap with straw, chose a good spot and walked along scattering the straw. I marked off close to two thousand ells of land and claimed it. Then I took a basket and night and day collected fragments of mud brick from the ruins of Baghdad. I carried the basket on my back to this spot and emptied it into the area marked off by the straw.

This went on until news came that a caravan of Khorasan was arriving. I rose and went out as far as Nahravān to meet the caravan from Khorasan. When they beheld me, they were very polite and showed me great respect, for most of them had seen me in the Shaikh's service and knew of my close relation to his person and were devotees of the Shaikh. Some of them were also devotees of my own.

I made the following request of them: 'I intend to build a hospice here for the Sufis. Now you must halt at this spot and stay with me, for you will be my first travelers.'

In the caravan there was a company of Sufis and a group of merchants, as well as a large number of ordinary people. All of them consented and accompanying me, they alighted at this spot and set up their tents. I rose and picking up a basket, set out to beg. Every day, mornings and evenings, I provided meals and at the five times I gave the call to prayer and acted as the prayer leader. And mornings, seated in a circle, we took turns reciting the Qor'ān.

During the period that they were there, much spiritual light was on hand.

When it was time for them to set out, having witnessed my life and found my service agreeable, each one of them, at the moment of departure, gave me a gift and I acquired a considerable sum.

Once the caravan had left, I began building. I raised the four walls of the *kānaqāh* and fitted the *kānaqāh*'s door. And I completed a fine, large *ṣoffa*⁵, a good assembly room for prayer, the latrine and the kitchen. And I constructed a big mosque room, and fitted all this with doors and laid the foundations for other buildings and rooms so that it was visible where all the other places would be.

When the messenger of the pilgrims to Mecca⁶ arrived and announced that the caravan was coming, I went out as far as the Euphrates to meet it and I requested of the same group: 'At the time of your setting out on this blessed journey, in compliance with my request and for the sake of helping and pleasing me, you alighted at my *kānaqāh* and when you departed, you made certain contributions.

Now you must come and witness the result of your effort, and complete the provisions which you have made.'

They consented and accompanying me, alighted there. When they beheld so much fine construction, they were amazed and wondered how I could do so much building in so short a time. And their faith increased a hundredfold.

For my part, just as before, I undertook to beg. I provided meals, gave the call for the five prayers, and acted as prayer leader. Every day I increased my service. And every day the faith of this group grew, until, at the time of their departure, each of them gave me a fine gift and I acquired a sizeable sum.

When the caravan set off, I began construction work again and completed a very fine *kānaqāh* with all the appurtenances -- *ḥammām*, cells, assembly rooms for prayer, and other things as well. I supplied handsome rugs, kitchen utensils and everything else the *kānaqāh* needed. By the entrance to the *kānaqāh* I established a bazaar with shops, caravanserai, a large mill⁷, a *ḥammām*, and other things as well.

I rendered very good service and from all corners of the world Sufis set out for this *kānaqāh*. The news spread abroad that Bu Sa'd had founded such a *kānaqāh*⁸ for the Sufis in Baghdad and was rendering service as no one in the world had ever done.

.....

The greater part of the people of Baghdad became my devotees and these matters were constantly reported to the caliph. Then one night when we had performed the bedtime prayers, someone knocked at the door. I went and opened the door. It was the Commander of the Faithful⁹ accompanied by several of his courtiers, such as the Mayor of the Palace, the Chamberlain, and the Keeper of the Treasury¹⁰. He had come like this on his own to visit me and to look over the *kānaqāh*.

I greeted the caliph with respect and he entered the *kānaqāh* and made a tour around the *kānaqāh* and saw the buildings. He

was greatly pleased. When he came to the darvishes' assembly room for prayer, he beheld a very fine group of more than fifty shaikhs and Sufis sitting on their prayer-rugs. He paid them a visit and sat down. For my part, as much as circumstances allowed, I offered him hospitality.

Then I sat down and told several stories about our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's miracles – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* A state of joy came over the caliph and he wept profusely. He became a fervent devotee of our Shaikh, as well as a devotee of mine and 'this mystic community'. Right there, while seated, he gave the following order, orally, to the Mayor of the Palace: 'At any time whatsoever that Bu Sa'd comes to the palace door, and no matter what situation I am in, he does not have to request an audience and is not to be kept at the palace door. Bring him into the private quarters immediately without consulting with me.'

And then he declared: 'Oh Bu Sa'd, I place the affairs of the Muslims on your shoulders. Whatever seems good to you, present to my attention so that I may accomplish the matter in accordance with your instructions.'

.....

The caliph departed and the morning of the following day I went to visit him in the caliphal palace. Without waiting or acquiring permission, the Mayor of the Palace immediately led me into the inner part of the private quarters. I went before the caliph, invoked God on his behalf and made excuses for the inadequacies of the previous night. The Commander of the Faithful received me with honor and respect and repeated what he had said before and placed the responsibility for the people on my shoulders.

.....

When I came forth from seeing the caliph, everyone was greatly surprised. All at once the people turned to me and began bringing their requests before me. I would present the requests to the caliph, who would order them to be granted.

The greater part of the people desired to live in my proximity and they built houses next to my *kānaqāh*, so that this part of the city became crowded. And every day my reputation increased in the caliph's eyes and his faith in me grew, until it came to pass that the caliph said: 'I will move the caliphal palace to the other side of the river, so as also to be with Shaikh Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā.'

Book Three, Chapter Three

The caliph moved the caliphal palace to this side of the river and all at once the whole population moved their houses to this side of the river. Suddenly the city, in one move, came over to this side.

The other side of the river fell into ruin and I became the Shaikh of Shaikhs of Baghdad¹¹. My reputation in Baghdad was no less than that of the caliph's. And this was due to the blessings of the Shaikh's glance and instructions -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*"

.....

And now his offspring are the Shaikh of Shaikhs of Baghdad and the loosening and binding of all affairs in Baghdad is in their hands.

They have come to be the ones who install the caliph. Thus, whenever a caliph wishes to ascend the throne, whoever is the eldest of Bu Sa'd's offspring, takes him by the hand and sits him on the throne. And it is he who first swears allegiance, next whoever are the sons of the caliph. Then follow the courtiers and the commanders and then the common people, until all men have sworn allegiance.

In Baghdad the loosening and binding of all affairs is in the hands of his offspring.¹²

* * *

I heard the following from Ašraf Abu'l-Yamān who has said:

"I heard Pir Moḥammad-e Bu Eshāq say that he had heard his own father say: 'Our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had a dark bay horse which he would mount but which, being spirited, would not submit to any other person. When the Shaikh wished to mount up, the horse would bring its flank alongside the raised platform and lower its back, so the Shaikh might get his leg over it.

When our Shaikh departed from the world, this horse was seen with its halter broken. Tears were flowing from its eyes in profusion and it was wandering about in the street. And it neither drank water, nor ate fodder.

The horse continued like this for seven days and nights and ate nothing.

On the eighth day people said: "This horse has grown thin. It's not drinking water, nor eating fodder. It will come to harm. What should we do?"

And KVāja Bu Ṭāher was informed. He said: "It must be slaughtered so that the darvishes may eat some of it and we may give some to the people."

This horse was slaughtered and people carried away portions of its flesh for the sake of blessings."

* * *

I heard Pir Zeyn al-Ṭāyefa 'Omar-e Šowkāni say:

"One day KVāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ, who was our Shaikh's grandson by a daughter, was sitting in a kānaqāh in Šowkān with my father. KVāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ was telling about the circumstances of our Shaikh's death and said: 'Three days before his death the Shaikh was sitting in his house and all the Shaikh's children and grandchildren were seated before him. And the Shaikh was in sound health. He turned to us and said: "My death will occur on Thursday. And on Friday there will be such a great crowd that you will not be able to come before my bier."

Then he ordered a tent to be brought which he had held by the four corners and opened up in midair. And he said to us: "Pass under this tent and imagine that it is my bier."

All the Shaikh's children and grandchildren did as the Shaikh ordered. Three days later exactly what the Shaikh had predicted, took place. Death came upon our Shaikh on Thursday.

On Friday when our Shaikh's bier was carried forth, there was so great a crowd that as much as we, who were the Shaikh's children, wanted, we were not able to come close to the Shaikh's bier."

He told this story and both of them wept.

God have mercy on them, one and all!

* * *

Shaikh Bu'l-Qāsem-e Rubāhi was a devotee of our Shaikh and the leader and chief of ten famous Sufis, like Bu Naṣr-e Ḥorzi and Aḥmad-e 'Adani Bāf¹³, and such as them. He has related:

"When news of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's death, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, reached Nishapur, Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri¹⁴, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, said: 'A person has departed who was no one's successor, and no one will be his successor.'

Then he rose and went to the *kānaqāh* of 'Adani Kuyān Street. There he sat down to mourn and acted as leader of the mourning ceremonies. And that day during the mourning he said: 'When I saw Shaikh Bu Sa'id, I both became a Sufi and beheld a Sufi. If I had not seen him, I would only have read about Sufism in books.'

When we were finished with the mourning and Ostād Imam had held the Shaikh's funerary banquet, on the seventh day he sent 'Ali-ye Mohtaseb, who was Ostād Imam's chief steward, before the ten of us with the message: 'If your goal was the Shaikh, the Shaikh has departed, and the ten of you once belonged to me. When the Shaikh came, you went before the Shaikh and remained with him. Now the Shaikh has departed. You must return to my service.'

The group replied: 'Give us a period to think this over.'

The following day he came back and said: 'Ostād Imam asks whether you have thought it over.'

The others were silent. I lost patience and said: 'Why don't you answer?'

They replied: 'What should we answer?'

I said: 'Shall I give the answer on your behalf?'

They said: 'Give the answer.'

I said: 'Give our greetings to Ostād Imam and tell him the following. Whenever there was a banquet, it was Shaikh Bu Sa'id's practice to give me a bowl of food, a fricassee of innards, and some sweets from what was set before him and a bowl of food, fried innards and sweets from the kitchen were also available to me as morsels to take home¹⁵.

One day there was a banquet and from the kitchen I received a leather pot with a bowl of fried innards placed on top of it, as well as a portion of sweets, as my morsels to take home. The portion of sweets I put inside one of my sleeves and the pot and bowl I held in one hand. And the pot and bowl and the portion of sweets which had been set before the Shaikh -- and he had given to me --, I placed in my other sleeve and held with my other hand.

And it was midday. The Shaikh had lain down in his room and all of the group were sleeping. I, being as just described, was

leaving the *kānaqāh*. When I reached the door, my trousers came undone at the waist.

The Shaikh's voice sounded from his cell of seclusion and he cried: "Give help to Bu'l-Qāsem!"

Straightway I beheld a Sufi who came running and said: "What's happened to you to make the Shaikh say give Bu'l-Qāsem help?"

I told him: "My trousers have come undone."

The darvish put his hand inside my robe and tied my trousers.

Now that was the sort of *pīr* and supervisor we had. If you are able to look after us like that, we should return to you. But if not, let us go.'

'Ali-ye Moḥtaseb departed. The morning of the following day Ostād Imam came to see us and made us an apology. And Ostād Imam requested of us: 'Now while I'm alive, don't tell anyone about this matter.'

We said we would not and Ostād Imam departed.

God have mercy on them, one and all!"

.....

After that Ostād Imam set out to make a pilgrimage to our Shaikh in Meyhana and forty eminent persons from among the Sufis accompanied him and were in attendance upon him.

When they reached the *rebāṭ*¹⁶ of Sar Kolah – and this is a *rebāṭ* two *farsangs*¹⁷ from Meyhana and when you arrive there coming from Ṭus, it is possible to see Meyhana, as you come forth from the mountain – when Ostād Imam reached this spot with his company and caught sight of Meyhana, he got down from his horse. And there were reciters with Ostād Imam. Ostād said: "Recite these verses:

My love, there is no thorn in *Kābarān*
That has not lashed my flesh and destiny.
But I would meet with no blame if I gave my life
To your beauty and grace one hundred thousand times."¹⁸

The reciters chanted these verses. An ecstatic state came over Ostād and he took off his patched frock. And the whole company did as Ostād and took off their patched frocks. Meanwhile, news

reached the Shaikh's offspring that Ostād Imam and a group of people from Nishapur were coming.

All the offspring and devotees of our Shaikh went out to welcome them. When they had gone one *farsang* from Meyhana and Ostād Imam and his company had advanced one *farsang* from the *rebāt*, they met each other on the road. The reciters went on chanting in the same way and the group from Meyhana, all together, took off their patched frocks as well. And so they proceeded to our Shaikh's tomb. And the reciters chanted and the darvishes rolled on the ground and ecstatic states occurred.¹⁹

Then they cut up the patched frocks and for a few days Ostād Imam experienced spiritual repose.

Then the Shaikh's offspring requested of Ostād Imam that he speak before an assembly in front of our Shaikh's sepulchral shrine. He would not consent. They were persistent and beseeched him at great length. Ostād Imam said: "It is definitely impossible for me to speak in front of the sepulchral shrine. But due to your request, I will speak in the congregational mosque."

Thereafter he spoke before an assembly three or four times in the congregational mosque. One day during the assembly he said:

"I opposed Shaikh Abu Sa'id with regard to some things but I treated him wrongly, for whoever confronts a man of ecstatic states with learning, acts wrongly."

After that he remained a few days in Meyhana and then departed.

* * *

At the beginning of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's career, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a pious lady of noble descent in Meyhana beheld in a dream that Adam, *peace be upon him*, accompanied by all the prophets, *upon them be peace*, had come to the spot where our Shaikh's sepulchral shrine is now located, and they stood there. It was such that, one after the other, this pious woman recognized Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus -- *peace be upon them!*

At that time this spot contained a house that belonged to someone. A while later it was made into a room and afterwards our Shaikh bought it. And here the Shaikh's horse was tied up.

After that our Shaikh rebuilt this room and made it into the sepulchral shrine. And he would sit there and so would the Sufis.

At the time that our Shaikh was rebuilding this room and dubbed it the sepulchral shrine, KVāja Imam Abu'l-Badr-e Mošreqi composed these verses in the Shaikh's presence:

*"The Shaikh of the age has built for us this building.
Whatever was before it, stands diminished.
The Ka'ba is the qebla²⁰ of men at large
But this house is the qebla of the lovers."*

When the Shaikh was on the verge of death, he ordered that he be buried in that room -- the place which is now his sanctified tomb.

That pious lady said: "The explanation of the dream I had, has become clear."

And she added: "I have waited forty years for the explanation of this dream."

When our Shaikh was buried, the pious lady said: "I looked and that spot was where I had seen the prophets standing and it has become the final resting place of this dignitary of the world and unique man of religion."

* * *

I heard the following from Ašraf Abu'l-Yamāni who said:

"I heard Shaikh Ḥasan-e Jānāru²¹ say that he had heard from KVāja Bu'l-Faṭḥ-e Šeyk -- God have mercy on them -- who said: 'My father, KVāja Bu Ṭāher-e Šeyk, was attending the Qor'ān school during his childhood. One day his teacher struck him, hard enough that the mark from the blow remained on his body. KVāja Bu Ṭāher left the school in tears and showed the mark to the Shaikh.

Our Shaikh sent a message to the teacher, saying: "I do not want to make a Qor'ānic reciter out of them, nor a prayer leader. All that is necessary is what is required for the prayers.

Be careful, for they are the beloveds of the Divine Presence. God, *He is holy and exalted*, has nurtured them through His grace and through His grace He has created them.

Be careful not to do them any violence."

Book Three, Chapter Three

And KVāja Bu Ṭāher disliked school intensely, more so than other children. It was extremely burdensome for him to go to school and he was always looking for an opportunity to be somehow released from school.

One day it passed the Shaikh's blessed lips that: "Whoever brings me news that darvishes are coming, I will grant him whatever he desires from me."

For it had been several days since any traveler had arrived and the Shaikh was very eager for the arrival of darvishes.

When KVāja Bu Ṭāher heard these words of the Shaikh, he immediately went up onto the roof and began to watch in all directions for the arrival of darvishes and was on the look out. As it happened, at that very moment a group of darvishes appeared coming from Ṭus.

KVāja Bu Ṭāher, full of joy, came down from the roof running and said to the Shaikh: "Oh Shaikh, a group of darvishes is arriving!"

The Shaikh replied: "Well, what do you wish now?"

He said: "That I don't have to go to school today."

The Shaikh replied: "Don't go."

He said: "And that I don't have to go tomorrow."

The Shaikh replied: "Don't go."

He added: "That I don't have to go this week."

The Shaikh said: "Don't go."

He said: "That I don't have to go this month."

The Shaikh replied: "Don't go."

Bu Ṭāher said: "That I don't ever have to go to school."

The Shaikh replied: "Don't go. Learn the surah '*We have given you a glorious victory...*'²² and memorize it. And don't go to school anymore."

KVāja Bu Ṭāher was delighted. Our Shaikh reached out and broke off a branch from the mulberry tree which is in front of his sepulchral shrine, and tied it to KVāja Bu Ṭāher's waist. And he gave him a broom and said: "Sweep the rug of the mosque."

KVāja Bu Ṭāher began to sweep there. Meanwhile, the darvishes arrived and having performed the customary prayers of entry, they came before the Shaikh. The Shaikh said to them: "How does KVāja Bu Ṭāher appear to you?"

They replied: "Very well, oh Shaikh!"

Our Shaikh said: "I have consecrated him and his offspring to your service."

.....

Then KVāja Bu Ṭāher learned by heart the surah 'We have given you a glorious victory...' but did not learn the Qor'ān. And so time went by.

When our Shaikh transferred to the proximity of God, *He is sublime and exalted*, and several years had elapsed, Neẓām al-Molk²³ was Sultan Malekšāh's²⁴ vezier and the capital was in Isfahan. As we described earlier, Neẓām al-Molk was a devotee of the Shaikh and the Shaikh's offspring and a devotee of all the Sufis because of our Shaikh.

KVāja Bu Ṭāher had incurred large debts on behalf of the Sufis. The need arose for him to go before Neẓām al-Molk in Isfahan, for it was such a debt that no one else could pay it. KVāja Bu Ṭāher, with all the offspring and devotees of the Shaikh, went to Isfahan before Neẓām al-Molk and Neẓām al-Molk ordered such assistance as exceeds the limits of description.

At that time an 'Alavi²⁵ had come on a mission from the sultan²⁶. He was a man of learning, an adherent of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, and given to partisanship. And he greatly disapproved of the Sufis. During the period that he was there, he constantly reproached Neẓām al-Molk, saying: "You give your wealth to a group which is unable to perform an ablution according to traditional practice and doesn't know how many obligatory practices and how many supererogatory practices there are in two *rak'ats* of prayer. They are devoid of any share in the sciences of religious law. An ignorant bunch, obedient to Satan!"

Neẓām al-Molk replied: "Don't talk like that. These are men who are informed and there is not one of them who does not know the science of religious law -- to the extent necessary for him to practice Islam. And their leaders are learned men of the religious law and the mystic path.

Now, the purpose of religious knowledge is practice and they are the people of knowledge and practice, whereas the greater part of religious scholars, do not act in accordance with what they know and say. And when knowledge does not become practice, nothing results from it but a proof against one²⁷ and misfortune."

To be brief, this discussion between them drew on and the envoy from Ġaznin had heard that KVāja Bu Ṭāher did not know the

Book Three, Chapter Three

Qorʾān but Neẓām al-Molk was unaware of this. The envoy from Ġaznin said to Neẓām al-Molk: "It is agreed, isn't it, that Shaikh Bu Saʿid-e Bu'l-Keyr is the leader and chief of all the Sufis in the world?"

He replied: "So it is."

The envoy said: "And it is agreed that after him his son is the best of all Sufis of this age and the Shaikh has said that K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher is the Pivot²⁸?"

Neẓām al-Molk answered: "It is so."

The envoy from Ġaznin said: "K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher doesn't know the Qorʾān."

Neẓām al-Molk replied: "Yes, he does."

He said: "No, he doesn't."

He said: "He does!"

And Neẓām al-Molk then said: "Let's call him. Then you choose a surah of the Qorʾān and I will tell him to recite it."

To this they agreed. Neẓām al-Molk sent someone to summon K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher. And K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher didn't know why he was being summoned. He rose and went before Neẓām al-Molk with the group of Sufis and the Shaikh's offspring. When they had sat down, Neẓām al-Molk asked the envoy from Ġaznin: "Which surah should he recite?"

The envoy from Ġaznin said: "Tell him to recite: '*We have given you a glorious victory...*'"

Neẓām al-Molk told K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher: "Oh K^Vāja, recite: '*We have given you a glorious victory...*'"

K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher began the surah and while he recited, he shouted out loud. And he and everyone in the group experienced a flush of joy and wept.

When he recited the whole of "*We have given you a glorious victory...*", Neẓām al-Molk was exceedingly happy and the envoy from Ġaznin was put to great shame because he proved to be a liar before so great a vezier and such a gathering. Out of shame he rose to his feet and left.

Neẓām al-Molk asked K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher: "Why did such a state of joy come over you and why was the group weeping?"

K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher replied: "Know, oh noble vezier, that I do not know the Qorʾān."

And he recounted this whole story from beginning to end for Neẓām al-Molk and Neẓām al-Molk said: "A person who, seventy

years beforehand, sees and knows that after his death an opponent will reproach one of his sons, and that day, in such a manner, closes up the breach where they will throw the stone of their taunt -- just look how high his spiritual rank is!"

Neẓām al-Molk became a thousand times more devoted than he had been, and wept profusely.

K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher was less than ten years old when our Shaikh ordered him to learn by heart "*We have given you a glorious victory...*". He was forty years old when death overtook our Shaikh. And after the Shaikh's death he lived another forty years. He died in the year 480²⁹."

* * *

During the period that our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was occupied with spiritual struggle and self-mortification, he would be absent from the house for one or two months and no one would find him. K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher was a child and he loved the Shaikh dearly. Whenever the Shaikh was absent, K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher would be very upset. All day he would go about the places where the Shaikh performed his devotions, searching for the Shaikh.

On one occasion the Shaikh had been absent for several days and had not returned to the house. K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher was extremely upset and very much wanted to be with the Shaikh. It was the summer and the heat was at its peak.

One day K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher got up at dawn and wandering about the countryside around Meyhana, he went to the places where the Shaikh performed his devotions. He visited all the *rebāṭs*³⁰ and mosques and cemeteries where he knew the Shaikh might seek solitude. He didn't find the Shaikh anywhere.

The day grew exceedingly hot and he became totally exhausted. At the hour of the noonday prayers he came to the door of the Rebāṭ-e Kohan.

.....

This is a *rebāṭ* situated on the Abivard road and was one of the places where the Shaikh practiced his devotions. The Shaikh had often withdrawn to this *rebāṭ* and performed many austere practices there -- such as have been described in part at the beginning of this compilation.

.....

When KVāja Bu Ṭāher came to the door of this *rebāṭ*, the door was locked. He knocked at the door and, as it happened, our Shaikh was inside. He came and opened the door. He beheld KVāja Bu Ṭāher in the state described. The heat had worked its effect on him and a hundred thousand drops of perspiration were flowing from his face, his hair, and his limbs. Due to the heat of the air and his exhaustion he lost consciousness when he saw the Shaikh, and fell down.

Tears flowed from the Shaikh's eyes and he said: "Oh Bu Ṭāher, what has happened and why have you come here?"

He replied: "Oh Shaikh, I have need of you."

The Shaikh said: "Since you have need of me, be with me in this world and be with me in the grave and be with me on the day of resurrection."

Then he opened his arms and taking KVāja Bu Ṭāher in his embrace, carried him into the *rebāṭ*. After that KVāja Bu Ṭāher was constantly with the Shaikh up until the time of our Shaikh's death.

At a later time when death came over KVāja Bu Ṭāher, the Shaikh's offspring were neglectful of these words of the Shaikh and had forgotten them. They wished to bury KVāja Bu Ṭāher in the cemetery.

When they had washed him and intended to carry him forth into the countryside, suddenly a great downpour of rain began. They stopped to wait for the rain to let up but every moment the rain increased.

They kept KVāja Bu Ṭāher in the house for three days and nights waiting for the rain to stop or to lessen, so that they could carry him forth into the countryside. Every moment the rain increased. When they felt there was nothing they could do, one of the Shaikh's intimate disciples said: "Didn't the Shaikh specify: 'You shall be with me in the grave.'?"

He must be buried close to the Shaikh's tomb. For this is nothing other than a miracle connected with what the Shaikh said."

When he had spoken thus, everyone remembered the words of the Shaikh and confirmed what the disciple said.

.....

There was a man called Qoteyba in the neighborhood of the Sufis, near our Shaikh's sepulchral shrine, who did plastering work

and he had dug the Shaikh's grave. He was summoned and ordered to dig the grave of K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher behind the Shaikh³¹.

Qoteyba set to work. When he had completed the grave and was arranging the spot where the head lies in the sepulchral niche, he struck with his pickaxe and a clod of earth from the back of the niche fell out, making a hole into the Shaikh's grave. Qoteyba let out a cry, replaced the clod in the hole and fell unconscious.

People went down into the grave and lifted Qoteyba out of the grave in an unconscious state and carried him home. And then K^Vāja Bu Ṭāher was buried.

They had barely shaken the earth from their hands, when the rain stopped, the clouds disappeared and the sun came out. It was verified for everyone that the rain was a miracle connected with what our Shaikh had said.

Meanwhile, Qoteyba remained unconscious for forty days and nights and never opened his eyes or spoke. It was never ascertained what he had seen. After forty days he passed over to the mercy of God -- *He is exalted!*

Everybody had something to say concerning what miracle of our Shaikh Qoteyba had beheld. However, no one related anything from the mouth of Qoteyba who had experienced the event. For his part, when he beheld this miracle, he let out a cry and fell unconscious and was unable to say anything more. His wits never came back to him before he died. *God have mercy upon him!*

Such being the case, and as whatever else was said could not be verified, this well-wisher has refrained from presenting it -- by way of circumspection.

* * *

Shaikh Bu'l-Faḥl-e Šāmi³² was a man of great esteem and dignity and he was one of the famous shaikhs of the Sufis. In his youth he had made many journeys. For several years toward the end of his life he resided in Jerusalem, engaged in pious devotions.

One night in Jerusalem -- in one of the *kānaqāhs* that are there -- he was asleep along with a group of Sufis. That night in a dream he saw our Shaikh Abu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr enter the *kānaqāh* -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* The Shaikh carrying a tray of sugar candy in his hand, came into the midst of the group and starting on one side, proceeded to give everyone a portion of that candy.

Book Three, Chapter Three

When he came to Shaikh Bu'l-Fa'zl, he placed everything that was left on the tray, in his mouth, so that his mouth was filled. Shaikh Bu'l-Fa'zl woke up out of joy and found his mouth filled with candy.

He immediately called the custodian of the *kānaqāh* and told him to light a light and bring it. Then the group was wakened and when they had sat together, Shaikh Bu'l-Fa'zl told them about his dream and gave everyone in the group a portion of the sugar candy.

Next, rising to his feet, he performed a major ritual ablution, as well as two *rak'ats*³³ of prayer, and having asked for his traveling shoes, he said: "I proclaim the pilgrimage to Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr in Meyhana!"

A considerable group accompanied him and he made the journey from Jerusalem to Meyhana on foot without ever mounting a horse along the way. And at this time he was over eighty years old.

When he arrived at Meyhana, he remained there a few days. At the time of his departure he summoned the Shaikh's children and told them: "I advise you to be careful in maintaining proper respect for this sanctuary and in fulfilling your duty towards this noble grave, for you do not know what you possess, nor do you appreciate the value of this blessing."

Having made many recommendations concerning this matter, he bade farewell to the gathering and departed for Jerusalem.

* * *

A few days after the death of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a man of spiritual eminence beheld our Shaikh in a dream. The Shaikh was seated on a raised platform and said:

"Whoever stands firm, will grow.

Whoever stands firm and persists in what I have said concerning 'this affair'³⁴, will acquire growth and reach the goal. Fix your shield firmly and see that you do not take to flight."

And a long time after our Shaikh's death another person from among the Sufis³⁵ beheld our Shaikh in a dream. And the Shaikh

said: "You eat the bread of the darvishes but you do not do the darvishes' work."

* * *

It has been related that my grandfather, Šeyk al-Eslām Bu Sa'd-e Šeyk, *God have mercy on him*, said:

"One time I had set out on a journey with a group of darvishes and a heavy downpour of rain began. We took shelter and for several days and nights the rain went on falling in the same way. Meanwhile, we and our horses remained in that place without provisions.

At a certain moment, out of despair, it passed my lips: 'What is this You're doing?'

That night I went to sleep and beheld our Shaikh in a dream – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* The Shaikh said: 'Oh Bu Sa'd, why don't you confine your remarks to what has to do with my intercession?'

I woke up and sought God's forgiveness. I made acts of repentance and wept profusely."

* * *

Shaikh Mahdi-ye Pāruzi was a man of great spiritual eminence and dignity, in whom many had faith. Sultan Sanjar³⁶, *God have mercy on him*, was his devotee and all the sultan's entourage and the army were devoted to him as well. He was endowed with intense ecstatic states and accepted by men of worldly power.

During the lifetime of my father, Nur al-Din-e Monavvar, *God have mercy on him* – and for more than thirty years my father was the custodian of the Shaikh's sanctuary and *pir* and leader of our Shaikh's offspring, *God have mercy on them* -- Shaikh Mahdi came to Meyhana to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*

And everyone agreed that after our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, no one served the darvishes like my father did, nor did anyone attain the success which he acquired and attained in building up this blessed sanctuary and in satisfying the hearts of the resident group and the visiting darvishes.

To be brief, Shaikh Mahdi made his pilgrimage and that day experienced spiritual repose. When night came on and the group of darvishes had finished their meal and the bedtime prayers, just

as every night the candles of the sepulchral shrine were lit. Reciters chanted the Qor'ān before the Shaikh's tomb and the group of Sufis and the people visited the shrine. Then Shaikh Mahdi said: "Tonight I intend to remain inside the sepulchral shrine by the tomb and to stay awake and perform devotions."

The leaders of the Shaikh's offspring replied: "This has not been customary. After the Shaikh's death no one has been able to stay inside the shrine at night, for our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has indicated: 'The daytime is for you, whereas the night is for another group, that is, for the Jinn³⁷.'

At midnight when the door of the sepulchral shrine is closed and under lock and key, anyone who listens, will hear the sound of the cover of the containers of the Qor'ānic fascicles³⁸ which have been placed on top of the tomb, and will perceive the walking and movement of a group. And it will be made clear that what the Shaikh indicated was true: 'At night it is the turn of the Jinn who reside close by my tomb.'

For this reason no one is able to stay inside the sepulchral shrine."

As much as they told him about this point, it was of no avail. He said: "I am definitely going to stay inside the shrine tonight."

When they had implored him at length but he would not consent, the custodian came outside, took away the light and having locked the door of the sanctified sepulchral shrine from outside, left.

The group of Sufis went up onto the roof -- it being the summer season -- and lay down to go to sleep. They had still not fallen asleep when a shout from Shaikh Mahdi arose from the street and the sepulchral shrine.

The Sufis came running down from the roof. There in the street, in front of the Sufis' fountain house, they beheld Shaikh Mahdi. He was sitting on the edge of the water channel with both his feet in the water.

They lifted him up and went to the door of the sepulchral shrine. When they looked, the lock was still in place on the door of the shrine. Then they carried him up onto the roof and asked him: "What is this situation?"

Shaikh Mahdi replied: "When the light was removed and the door of the shrine was locked, I occupied myself with prayer. After performing two *rak'ats* of prayer, I sat down and lowered my head in order to meditate for a moment. For a short while I dozed off.

Then I felt a wetness from water reach my foot. I opened my eyes. I found myself in the middle of the street, sitting on the edge of the water channel with both my feet in the water, just as you saw me."

That night Shaikh Mahdi slept on the roof. At dawn when the custodian of the sepulchral shrine opened the shrine door and went in with a candle, he brought out Shaikh Mahdi's shoes from inside the shrine and took them to him.

After that Shaikh Mahdi remained in Meyhana a few days and then departed. When he returned to Nasā, the spiritual guides of Nasā asked him: "How did you find the Shaikh's offspring?"

He replied: "I saw that Monavvar is an illuminated one³⁹!"

He said these words concerning my father. *May God have mercy on both of them!*

* * *

The illustrious KVāja Imam Fakr al-Din the Traditionist of Khorasan Abu'l-Fath Moḥammad b. Abi Bakr b. Maṣṣūr al-Qāzi al-Meyhani al-Saraksi⁴⁰, who was one of the outstanding religious leaders of Khorasan and esteemed for piety, learning and scrupulosity in religious practice, arrived in Meyhana in the month of Šavvāl, 590⁴¹, to make a pilgrimage to our Shaikh -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He has said: "I beheld one of the prophets of the Israelites in a dream. I know for certain that he was a prophet but I don't know which he was by name. I said to him: 'Give me a word of advice.'

He replied: 'Undertake a pilgrimage to Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr.'

I asked: 'Oh prophet of God, which is better, voluntary prayers and fasting, or the pilgrimage to the Shaikh?'

He was silent and did not answer. Since he was silent, I grew silent as well. Then he said: 'Going on pilgrimage to him is equal to the pilgrimage to prophets -- *peace be upon them!*'

I arose and came here on pilgrimage."

And he put on the patched frock with blessings.

* * *

In an assembly which he held in Meyhana before the sepulchral shrine of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, I heard

Tāj al-Eslām Abu Sa'd b. Moḥammad al-Sam'āni⁴², *God sanctify his awesome soul*, who said: "I went on the pilgrimage to Mecca with my father. When we were finished with the pilgrimage rites, my father said: 'Let us go visit Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari⁴³.'"

.....

And he was one of the eminent shaikhs of the age and his miracles are very famous. In this connection Kvāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri⁴⁴ has related: "I heard one of the eminent Sufis say: 'One day I was sitting in the Sacred Mosque⁴⁵ in the presence of Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari. A person endowed with human shape but not like today's human beings, came in through the door and said to Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari: *Tomorrow shall we go to see the Chief⁴⁶?*'"

Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek replied: "Yes."

And this person departed. A darvish was present who asked: "Oh Shaikh, out of respect for Moṣṭafā⁴⁷, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, tell me who was this person and what did he say?"

Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek replied: "That was Kezr⁴⁸ -- *peace be upon him!* He asked if I would go with him tomorrow to Medina. I said I would.'"

And there are many miracles of this kind connected with him.

.....

Tāj al-Eslām went on to say: "I went with my father to the kānaqāh in Mecca to look for him. They told us: 'He has performed the midmorning prayers and gone to the Mosque of 'Āyeša. He is improving the road of Miqāt-e 'Omra⁴⁹ because there are large and unpleasant stones on it. He is making it smooth so that the feet of the pilgrims will not be hurt. That is where you should look for him.'

We went there and stood behind him at a distance. We saw that he was wearing a patched frock and had tucked up his skirts and rolled up his sleeves. He was seated on a rock and had placed another rock in front of him which he was breaking into small pieces with a chisel.

When he finished breaking that rock, he turned his face in our direction. My father greeted him with 'salaam'. He returned the greeting and said: 'Come closer.'

We came close up to him. My father said: 'I am from Khorasan, from Marv. I am the son of Moẓaffar-e Sam'āni.'

He replied: 'I know.'

Then he asked: 'Have you come here to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca?'

My father replied: 'Yes, I have.'

He asked: 'Haven't you been to Meyhana?'

My father said: 'Yes, I have been there.'

He asked: 'Didn't you make the pilgrimage to Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr?'

He replied: 'I did.'

Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari said: 'Then what are you doing here? And why have you come this long way?'

When he had said this, he busied himself with his work again. We gave him polite salutations and departed."

Tāj al-Eslām Bu Sa'd has said: "Ever since that time when I heard these words, I have taken it upon myself as a duty that every year when people set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca, I go on pilgrimage to the Shaikh in Meyhana."

* * *

And I also heard this story from my paternal cousin, Nāṣeh al-Din Bu Moḥammad with another chain of transmission. He said:

"I went to Saraks in the company of the headman of Meyhana. The headman of Meyhana said: 'Let us go and give our greetings to the eminent k^vāja imam of Bokhara⁵⁰.'

He was an imam whom the illustrious military commander⁵¹ had brought from Bokhara to teach in his *madrasa*⁵² in Saraks.

When we went in and I was introduced as an offspring of Shaikh Bu Sa'id-e Bu'l-Keyr, rising to his feet once more, he embraced me and showed me great respect. And he said: 'During my youth I was in Marv studying under K^vāja Imam Moḥammad-e Sam'āni, *God have mercy on him*, and I took dictation from him on religious jurisprudence. He happened to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca and entrusted me to an assistant teacher before he set out.

When he returned, I was required to recite for him everything I had taken down in dictation while he was absent. One day when I went to see him, there were two eminent religious leaders of Marv seated before him and conversing with him. K^vāja Imam

Book Three, Chapter Three

Mohammad-e Sam'āni, *God have mercy on him*, was telling them about his pilgrimage to Mecca. Then he said: "When I arrived in Mecca, I wanted to visit Shaikh 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari... ""

And he told the story just as has been written.

* * *

Hakim b. Mohammad al-Abivardi has said:

"There was a very ascetic man in our vicinity, who practiced religious devotions and much self-mortification. He related: 'For one year I constantly undertook religious devotions and with lamentation and weeping I beseeched the Lord, *He is sublime and exalted*, to indicate to me an action through which I might attain the rank of Shaikh Bu Sa'id.

When I had practiced devotions and self-mortification with this intention for one whole year, one night while I was asleep, I had a dream in which a voice from the beyond said to me: "Shaikh Bu Sa'id acted in accordance with one of the Traditions of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, in order to attain the rank which you have seen and heard about."

I woke up and for another year practiced devotions and undertook forms of self-mortification. With lamentation and weeping I beseeched the Lord, *He is sublime and exalted*, to tell me the particular Tradition and to show me which of the Traditions of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, the Shaikh had acted in accordance with.

After another year, one night I had a dream and the voice from the beyond said: "The Tradition that the Shaikh acted upon is the one in which Moṣṭafā says:

'Join whoever has broken off with you, give unto him who has taken something from you, and forgive whoever has treated you unjustly.'"

I woke up and realized that I and those like myself were not capable of striving to attain the rank of Shaikh Bu Sa'id. I had been obliged to practice religious devotions and undergo self-mortification and austerities for two years in order to be told which of the Traditions of Moṣṭafā, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, the Shaikh had acted in accordance with.

I am unable to undertake the spiritual task that he undertook."

* * *

Abu'l-Faḥḥ Moḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥaddād⁵³ has said:

"For years my father waited upon Shaikh Bu Sa'īd, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and when death came to the Shaikh, my father departed and remained at home. And once or twice a year he would go to Meyhana to make a pilgrimage to the Shaikh. Through him I would send something to the Shaikh's offspring and devotees who resided at the Shaikh's tomb and by means of this consideration I sought to gain favor with the Shaikh's Majesty⁵⁴.

My father constantly told us stories about the Shaikh and would describe his blessed countenance, his stature and his face and hair. When my father went over to the mercy of God, *He is sublime and exalted*, it occurred in my heart to make a pilgrimage to Shaikh Bu Sa'īd and I set out.

When I reached the outskirts of Meyhana, I halted until night came on. At night I entered Meyhana, undertook a major ritual ablution and performed two *rak'ats*⁵⁵ of prayers in front of the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine. Then having sat down, I lowered my head and sleep came over me.

I beheld the Shaikh in a dream and he appeared just as in my father's account and description. He said to me: 'Do not consort with my offspring. If you wish to study the path of God, *He is sublime and exalted*, go before Bābu Fala⁵⁶ in Saraks.'

I woke up and immediately put on my traveling shoes and went to Bābu Fala in Saraks."

.....

And he was one of the eminent disciples of our Shaikh Abu Sa'īd -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* When our Shaikh was close to death, he told Bābu Fala to go to Saraks to the *kānaqāh* of Pir Bu'l-Faḥḥ -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* Bābu Fala did this and through him acts of the spirit occurred and many devotees appeared and the mystic community received much illumination from him. Now that *kānaqāh* is called the *Kānaqāh* of Bābu Fala.

.....

"I went before Bābu Fala and remained in his attendance. While waiting upon him, I experienced much illumination and inspiration on the path of religion.

When he died, I went before Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri⁵⁷ – *God sanctify his awesome soul!* He asked me: 'Where do you come from?'

I told him my story and about the dream of the Shaikh which I had had. He wept because of the Shaikh's miracle and said: 'Something also happened to me which was connected with Bābu Fala.'

And he related: 'I went to Saraks on an important errand and when I arrived there, all the religious leaders, dignitaries and Sufis of the city and the province came forth to welcome me and give me their greetings. Bābu Fala was the only one who didn't come and I had expected him to come and greet me.'

When several days had gone by and he had not come, I was distressed by this. One night I went to sleep and in a dream I beheld Moştafā⁵⁸, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, who said to me: "Aḥmad-e Fala has remained indoors so that you may go to see him. You must go to give him greetings."

I woke from my sleep and the following day in accordance with Moştafā's instructions, *God's blessings and peace be upon him*, I went to visit Bābu Fala and give him my greetings."

And Moḥammad-e Ḥaddād became one of the eminent men of this mystic community, due to the instructions of the Shaikh and the spiritual guidance of Bābu Fala -- *God have mercy on him!*

* * *

I heard the following from K^Vāja Emām-e Ajall Ṣāḥib al-Dīn As'ad-e Qoşeyri⁵⁹ – *God have mercy on him!* He was the grandson of Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoşeyri, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, and he has said:

"I had incurred seven hundred dinars of debts on behalf of the Sufis in Nishapur. I decided to set out for the army's encampment⁶⁰ and the army was at Marv.

When I reached Meyhana, the offspring of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, kept me there for several days and showing me much polite consideration, would not let me depart.

When I had remained there a certain time, I hired riding animals and made arrangements for us to set off in the direction of Marv. I put on my traveling shoes and with this intention I entered the sepulchral shrine. After beholding the Shaikh's tomb, I lowered my head and closed my eyes.

It was as if all veils were removed from my sight. I beheld the Shaikh face to face and he said to me: 'Did your father or your grandfather ever do what you are doing? Turn back and stay at home, for your purpose will be fulfilled there as well.'

I came out of the shrine and said: 'Return these riding animals and take back the rental money and hire other riding animals for Nishapur.'

Riding animals were hired and I departed. I went to Nishapur and stayed in the *kānaqāh*. God, *He is sublime and exalted*, saw to it that within that very month not one *dāng*⁶¹ of the debt of seven hundred Nishapuri dinars remained. All of it was paid.

That year there were such donations that besides covering the *kānaqāh*'s expenses, several fine properties⁶² were acquired for the *kānaqāh*. No other year did we ever have so ample and so handsome a means of subsistence, thanks to the blessing of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's magnanimous spirit and instruction -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!*"

* * *

K'vāja Abu'l-Ma'ālī-ye Qoşeyri⁶³, *God have mercy on him*, has related:

"Several years after the death of our Shaikh Abu Sa'id, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, a banquet was held in Nishapur in our Shaikh's *kānaqāh* which was on 'Adani Kuyān Street. I, along with my father and my two uncles, Imam Abu Naşr-e Qoşeyri⁶⁴ and Imam Bu Sa'id-e Qoşeyri⁶⁵ -- *God have mercy on them, one and all* -- was present, and all the religious leaders and Sufis of the city were on hand.

Fakr al-Eslām Abu'l-Qāsem-e Joveyni⁶⁶, the son of Emām al-Ḥarameyn Abu'l-Ma'ālī, was with us and he was an arrogant, impetuous man and he was young. He was talking to us a great deal. My father said to him: 'Don't speak. We mustn't incur reproach from the Sufis.'

Fakr al-Eslām replied: '...in the mustache of all the Sufis, once they've reached the rank of Joneyd⁶⁷!'

He said these words and went on talking in such a manner.

A cat entered the *kānaqāh* and starting on one side, went along sniffing each person in the group one by one. When the cat reached Fakr al-Eslām, it sniffed him, lifted its leg⁶⁸ and pissed on him. Then it left through the *kānaqāh* door.

Book Three, Chapter Three

Fakr al-Eslām was put to shame and he knew where this slap on the back of the neck⁶⁹ came from. He rose to his feet to seek forgiveness. The group pointed to K^Vāja Imam Bu Sa‘id-e Qoşeyri who was the most eminent in the company, for they were aware of what had happened. K^Vāja Imam Bu Sa‘id said: ‘You must seek forgiveness from Bu Sa‘id-e Bu‘l-Keyr, as this was a miracle from him and this is his *kānaqāh*. So many years after his death he is watching over the conduct of the group, such that if one of the group commits an improper act, the Shaikh boxes his ears in this manner.’

The whole company was in agreement with this. Fakr al-Eslām turned toward Meyhana and asked for forgiveness and wept profusely.

The group experienced states of ecstasy and let out shouts. Patched frocks fell to the ground and a higher moment and ecstatic state came to pass.”

* * *

K^Vāja Nāşer, the son of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, fell sick in Meyhana. Some time after our Shaikh's death he went to Țus to see a doctor and remained there for several days. When he felt a bit better, one day he went to the Safālaqān Cemetery to visit the tombs of the shaikhs -- *God sanctify their spirits!*

When he returned and went to sleep that night, he beheld our Shaikh in a dream -- *God sanctify his awesome soul!* The Shaikh said to him: "Oh Nāşer,

This is Tibetan musk with fresh ambergris.
Oh friend, don't pay heed to other aromatics."

When K^Vāja Nāşer, the Shaikh's son, woke up, he immediately decided to depart for Meyhana. The next day early in the morning he left Țus. He returned to Meyhana and within that month he went over to the mercy of God -- *He is exalted!*⁷⁰

God have mercy on him!

* * *

Imam Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Vā'ez al-Sarak̲si has related:

"I heard the following from Kvāja Aḥmad-e Maḥmud-e Šufi who said: 'After our Shaikh Abu Sa'id's death a much esteemed darvish, who was one of the residents of my kānaqāh, beheld the Shaikh in a dream and asked him: "Oh Shaikh, while in the world, you had an extreme craving for the samā⁷¹. What is your situation now with regard to the samā?'"

The Shaikh looked at him and said:

"I have been released by this Beloved's singing
From the *mowṣeli* and *argānun*⁷² melodies."

When the Shaikh recited these verses, the darvish let out a shout and woke up. A state of ecstasy came over him. When he had calmed down and we asked him how he was, he told us the story."

* * *

At the time when the martyr, Sultan Sanjar, *may God illuminate his tomb*, went to Samarqand and the infidels of Keṭā⁷³ defeated him and this great calamity occurred, the just and learned king, Kvārazmšāh Atsez⁷⁴, *may his final resting place be agreeable*, came to Khorasan.

Having reached Bāvard, he set out for Kābarān⁷⁵ and he intended to order the plundering of Kābarān. When he arrived at a place one *farsang*⁷⁶ from Meyhana, a place called the Rebāt of Sar Bālā -- and when you ascend this hill, all Meyhana is clearly visible -- and his sight fell on Meyhana, the horse he was riding came to a halt.

As much as he struck it with the whip and exerted himself, the horse would absolutely not go forward. He called for his reserve horse and mounted it. It also would not go forward. As much as he strove, the horse would not take one step. He dismounted and got onto a mule but it would not take one step either. He beat it vigorously but it was of no avail.

His vezier was with him and at that time the vezier was Kvāja-ye 'Erāq al-Šābandi⁷⁷, *God have mercy on him!* He said: "Oh just

king, this place is considered a venerable and blessed locality and in this sanctuary is the tomb of a shaikh who was unique in the world. Change the intention which you had with regard to this sanctuary."

He replied: "I have changed it."

All at once the horse on which he was seated, went forward. The king conceived a profound faith in our Shaikh. Straightway he sent his personal bodyguard to Meyhana to act as prefect of police and he ordered: "Announce the glad tidings to the people of this sanctuary that I have changed the intention which I had. No person will covet one piece of bread from you."

And he ordered his bodyguard: "You must look after this town in such a way that no harm comes to a single blade of straw that belongs to anyone."

And he sent the officers in charge of leading the army⁷⁸ to designate a place for the army encampment in such a way that would cause no harm. And when he dismounted, he ordered the proclamation: "This province belongs to my private treasury. I do not want anyone to allow harm to come to anything."

And he ordered: "We will remain here for three days."

Then the Shaikh's offspring and the Sufis came forth and he gave them audience and bestowed much honor and respect upon them.

And Jamāl al-Din Bu Rowḥ⁷⁹, who was the paternal cousin of the well-wishing author of this collection and endowed with profound learning in the branches of religious knowledge, invoked God on behalf of the king and gave a fine discourse and spoke in detail about the spiritual states, miracles, ascetic disciplines and self-mortification of our Shaikh.

The king dismissed the group but kept Jamāl al-Din behind because he was pleased by what he had said. Directly after the bedtime prayers, the king went with him to make a pilgrimage to our Shaikh and when he had performed the pilgrimage to the tomb, he dismissed Jamāl al-Din on the understanding that Jamāl al-Din come before him in the morning and continue to do so during the next three days.

When the king had returned to the army encampment and his men were taking their rest, a fire appeared from the direction of the *qebḷa*⁸⁰ and every moment the fire went on increasing.

The fire's rays reached the sky. All at once the whole sky appeared red, as if fire had broken out in the sky itself. And a good

wind was blowing which every moment made the fire grow, so that the whole mountain which was near Meyhana, had caught fire over an area of almost two *farsangs*. It seemed as if the fire was heading toward Meyhana and had reached close by.

Clamor and tumult arose in the army encampment. The KṼārazmšāh woke up. He asked: "What has happened and what is the cause of this clamor?"

He was told: "A fire has appeared from the direction of the *qebḷa* and is heading towards the army encampment. It looks as if the whole sky is filled with fire."

The KṼārazmšāh came out of the royal tent and beheld this extremely terrifying situation. And he saw how upset and frightened the army was. Straightway he mounted his reserve horse, just as he was, and said: "Shaikh Bu Sa'īd has lit a fire against us!"

Having said this, he rode off on his horse. And the army immediately followed after him.

Meanwhile, none of the people of Meyhana had knowledge of this situation, except that at night they saw the fire on the mountain in the direction of the *qebḷa* and observed the sky's redness and the terrifying spectacle.

Early the next morning when it was daylight, in all the countryside around Meyhana not one horseman remained from so great an entourage and so many mounts and men. The people were amazed at how so many men and animals and baggage and tents could depart from the countryside during the night without anyone in Meyhana having had information about them or having heard their movement.

Then the inhabitants of Meyhana inquired about what that fire had been. It became known that a group of peasants having planted grain on that mountain near Meyhana, had reaped it and stacked it and had been busy threshing and gathering it. At night they made a fire in order to bake their bread. Some of this fire fell from a person's hand and landed amidst the scrub and the wind caused it to flare up.

Little by little, all the cornstalks caught fire and were burned for a distance of one to two *farsangs* where the reaping had been carried out. The rays from the fire reached the sky and the sky turned red so that it seemed as if the sky itself was on fire.

And another of our Shaikh's miracles was that while a fire such as this was burning, so big that its length and width were one *farsang* each, and in its midst there were many people, animals

Book Three, Chapter Three

and stacks of grain, absolutely no one suffered the loss of a single seed of grain. Thanks to the blessing of these miracles of the Shaikh, so great a calamity as this was averted from Meyhana, nay even from the whole of Kābarān, so that no one suffered any damage and loss.

* * *

Awhad al-Ṭāyefa Moḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Eslām was born of one of the slaves of this well-wisher's grandfather. At the time when the calamity of the Gozz⁸¹ occurred, the greater part of our Shaikh's offspring were martyred in that calamity, such that in Meyhana one hundred and fifteen of our Shaikh's descendants, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, were killed by means of torture, burning and the sword -- apart from those who died, two or three months after this calamity, of plague and famine, the Gozz being, for the most part, the cause of these events. And the same befell the inhabitants of Meyhana.

For a period of one to two years there was a general evacuation of Meyhana. No one remained in Meyhana. Those of the inhabitants who had survived were scattered throughout other provinces. After two or three years a few darvishes returned. They repaired a small ruined fortification which was in Meyhana and they made that their abode. From that fortification to our Shaikh's blessed sepulchral shrine, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, was quite some distance.

During this period Awhad Moḥammad-e ‘Abd al-Eslām resided at the blessed tomb of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, for he was very lame and could only move about with the greatest difficulty. Since at the time of the people's departure and dispersal abroad there were no riding animals in Meyhana -- and those who were fleeing, drove their wives and children before them and left on foot with the infants on their back --, he was forced to remain there and he took refuge at the door of the sepulchral shrine. And similarly a group of three or four consisting of blind men without anyone and weak persons, stayed with him.

When the people had departed and these persons remained alone with no one, God, *He is sublime and exalted*, through His perfect generosity and nobility and by means of the blessing of our Shaikh's high spirit, opened the doors of daily sustenance and bounty before Awhad al-Ṭāyefa and those feeble few, so that every

traveler who came there to make a pilgrimage to the sanctified sepulchral shrine, gave them some sizeable consideration.

And when news spread that Meyhana had been evacuated and that these infirm persons were residing at our Shaikh's tomb, the evildoers stopped their raiding and attacks, while the believers sent gifts and undertook all forms of beneficence on their behalf to the extent that he has related: "That year or two was the best of my life and I will never forget that ease and enjoyment."

And when the people returned and took up their abode in the fortification, he remained in attendance at our Shaikh's tomb, just as before, for more than twenty years and he continued to serve that blessed sanctuary and if a darvish arrived, he would wait upon him. His womenfolk, however, he sent to the fortification, while he resided before the sepulchral shrine.

.....

Then, after quite some time this well-wisher, the compiler of these words, arrived there. I asked him: "During this period that you have resided at the blessed tomb, what miracles of our Shaikh did you see?"

He replied: "Not a day goes by without one of his miracles appearing to me, so that it would be impossible and impracticable to count them. But I will tell you about two things that happened to me which are both miracles that I beheld. And I told people about this because I didn't have the strength to keep it secret. Afterwards I never saw anything like this again and I realized that if I had kept it secret, later on I would have seen many things greater than that. I regretted what I had done but it was of no avail.

One was the following. During the summer I would not go to the fortification at night to be with my children, rather all through the summer I would sleep in front of the sepulchral shrine on raised platforms which stood before the sanctified shrine.

One night I was asleep and that night was one of 'the white nights'⁸² when the moon is full and from the beginning to the end of the night it is light. As on every night I had locked the doors of the sepulchral shrine and firmly locked the outer door of the shrine.

When I had just begun to sleep, a man who was an inhabitant of Meyhana, arrived. He had been out in the countryside. Seeing me, he also went to sleep in front of the sepulchral shrine – on the ground.

Book Three, Chapter Three

When it was past midnight, I woke up. I heard a voice reciting the Qor'ān, coming from inside the sepulchral shrine. I listened carefully and someone with a beautiful voice was reciting: 'We have given you a glorious victory...'.⁸³ I was amazed wondering how -- since I had locked the doors myself -- someone had opened the doors and the outer door of the shrine without my hearing it and waking up.

I rose to my feet and took a look. The door of the sepulchral shrine was still locked. The moon had reached the middle of the sky and the entire place was lit up. Inside the sepulchral shrine, due to the moonlight, it was as bright as day. It was made certain to me that this voice was none other than the Shaikh's and it was he reciting the Qor'ān. An ecstatic state came over me.

However hard I tried, I couldn't restrain myself. I woke up the man who was sleeping there, and said: 'Listen! More than one hundred years after the Shaikh's death how clearly you can hear him reciting the Qor'ān!'

When I said these words and the man had woken up, this voice went under the veil. Neither I could hear it, nor could the man.

.....

And another is the following. It was my practice that every day in the winter when I would come from the fortification to the sepulchral shrine, I would bring a little something to eat in case of need, since it was a good distance from the fortification to the sepulchral shrine and it was difficult for me to walk.

One day I hadn't eaten anything and that night when I came home, I ate what had been prepared. I became ill and in my fever I vomited much and the next day in the morning hunger overcame me, for I hadn't eaten anything for a whole day and night. I took a piece of bread and a few eggs to eat in front of the sanctified sepulchral shrine.

When I arrived at the shrine, I beheld a darvish with a patched frock, seated in front of the sepulchral shrine. He had lowered his head and placed his walking stick and ewer by his side. When I laid eyes on him, nothing of my human weakness remained in me and ease and comfort came to me from him, such that I was enraptured.

Then I slowly went to the door of the sepulchral shrine and opened the shrine door. When he heard the door of the shrine, he

raised his head. I greeted him with 'salaam' and he stood up and returned my greeting and embraced me.

I received such comfort from him that I am unable to describe it. I sat down and asked after him and, although he didn't say so, it was clear to me that he had arrived toward evening prayers and there had been no one here to show him consideration and he had remained without food and stayed awake all night.

Straightway I placed the bread and eggs before him and chose to travel the path of generosity. Eating a small bit myself, for the sake of keeping him company, I waited upon him and made do with the pleasure of watching him, which is food for the spirit.

So, having eaten the food, he washed his hands and undertook a ritual ablution again and performed two *rak'ats*⁸⁴ of prayer. Then putting on his traveling shoes, he bade me farewell and departed. I went hungry that day as well. But because of the pleasure of watching that darvish and being in his company, that day I had no thought of hunger.

When toward evening prayers I returned to the fortification, they had prepared something at home I didn't like, so I was unable to eat it and they were sure that I'd eaten something. That night I went to bed very hungry.

The next day I performed the morning prayers and following my usual practice, set off for the sanctified sepulchral shrine. And I was so weak that after every two steps I would sit down. When I had arrived before the sanctified sepulchral shrine and opened the shrine door, with the intention of sweeping the shrine as I did every day, I bowed and went inside.

There where the people take off their shoes opposite the base of our Shaikh's tomb, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, I saw a dark blue pitcher full of water and two pieces of white bread placed on top of the pitcher. I stretched my hand out toward it and the bread was warm, so much so that the heat from it reached my hand.

Then I picked it up and began to cry. I knew that this was nothing less than a sheer miracle of our Shaikh. For at this hour there was no one here to bake this bread. No one lived in the town. And if it had been brought from somewhere, it wouldn't have arrived here so warm that you thought it had been taken out of the oven that very moment.

I sat down and while I ate the bread, I wept. As long as I have lived, I have never tasted food that was more delicious than that, nor have I ever drunk water that was more cool and sweet and tasty than this water.

Book Three, Chapter Three

And an even greater miracle was that though I had gone hungry for two whole days and nights, I was so sated with these two light pieces of bread that for the next two days I had no desire for food and was unable to eat anything.

When I returned to the fortification toward evening prayers and the people gathered together for prayer, my patience could not contain this matter. As hard as I tried, I was unable to restrain myself. I said: 'Oh people, you do not know what you have! And you do not honor and respect this noble tomb as you should. That is why you experience all these afflictions and hardships.'

And I related this story. Those present wept profusely. However, after that I never saw anything of this kind again, for I had committed an unworthy act and I had been unaware that if I had not revealed these two miracles of the Shaikh, many things would have been made manifest to me.

I regreted what I had done but it was of no avail. Nonetheless, there were many miracles of his which were made manifest to others in my presence, and it would be impossible to count them."

* * *

Our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, has said: "Happy the person who has seen me, and happy the person who has seen someone who has seen me, and happy the person who has seen someone who has seen someone who has seen me..."

And the Shaikh went on in this way until he had counted seven persons, to the effect that: "Happy that person who has seen the seventh person (removed from the person) who has seen me!"

* * *

Know that the miracles which became manifest after the death of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, are too numerous possibly to be presented in writing. And so it is that Abu'l-Fakr b. Mofazzal, the son of this well-wisher's maternal uncle, and al-Monavvar b. Abi Sa'd, the son of this well-wisher's brother, have related:

"During the days of the interlude of the Gozz⁸⁵, Meyhana had been laid waste and no one resided in the town. Those of the inhabitants of Meyhana who had remained, stayed in the fortification and would come forth and cut down the mulberry trees which were in the town quarters, for firewood.

The two of us, along with fellow students, went to the quarter of the Sufis and we were chopping down a tree near the sanctified sepulchral shrine. It was the hour of the noonday heat. Besides ourselves there was no one else in this neighborhood. In accordance with the misbehavior of children, we were raising a tumult. The students were chopping with the axe and the noise of our voices and the blows of the axe filled the neighborhood.

We heard a voice from the door of the sepulchral shrine, saying: 'What is this that you are doing?'

We looked in that direction and saw an old man standing at the door of the sepulchral shrine. He had a rosy complexion and a white beard reaching to his navel -- just as our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, had been described. He shouted to us: 'Has the time still not come when I may escape from your misbehavior?'

When we beheld him, we all took flight in terror of him, leaving behind the axe and clothing. Only toward the afternoon prayers when people appeared in that neighborhood, did we return, take the axe and clothing, and then depart.

After that we never committed this kind of misbehavior in that neighborhood again."

.....

And there are exceedingly many occurrences of this kind, such that it would be difficult to enumerate them and if they were all mentioned, this book would become long. In the same way the instructive sayings of the Shaikh and the accounts of his miracles surpass what can be contained in this compilation. The present amount has been mentioned for the sake of blessings. And yet, miracles and such like in comparison with the Shaikh's spiritual state were but one drop from out of an ocean.

Thus, Kṡāja Imam Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Māleki has said: "I have heard several eminent spiritual guides say: 'People are amazed at the abundance of Shaikh Bu Sa'id's miracles and the clairvoyance which he possessed with regard to the thoughts and the inner states of the servants of God -- *He is exalted!* But Shaikh Bu Sa'id says: "The possessor of miraculous powers holds no high rank at 'this royal court', for his rank is that of a spy and it is clear what rank a spy is able to hold at the king's court.

Book Three, Chapter Three

And the possessor of clairvoyance receives no share and portion of the office of Friend of God, unless it be one *dāng* out of every ten dinars⁸⁶.

And Abu Sa'id has said: "Strive to become a possessor of the Friendship of God, so that you are everything and everything that exists belongs to you."

From these words of our Shaikh it becomes clear that miracles and the power of mindreading in comparison with our Shaikh's spiritual state were nothing. However, the eye of the common people perceived no more than this degree of our Shaikh's rank and they considered it to be awesome of itself and to them it appeared amazing, whereas that state set alongside our Shaikh's spiritual rank was nothing at all. He considered this of no consequence compared with the state he had attained.

We, however, take this to be awesome because we are unaware of what reality is, and we see nothing of matters but the outer appearance and even then not the whole of it. May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, bestow on us, before death, vision and wakefulness!

* * *

The well-wishing compiler of these blessed words requests of the dignity of those eminent men who will peruse this collection, that when, during their reading of this rough draft, they become aware of some oversight and error, they cover it with the train of forgiveness and the skirts of generosity, and pronounce it excused and do not deny it correction. And should they find some delectation in the spiritual states and discourses of our Shaikh, *God sanctify his awesome soul*, or experience ecstasy and a higher moment, may they, while in that ecstasy and higher moment, not forget this weak well-wisher but recall this disobedient sinner by invoking blessings on him.

And if anyone receives guidance from these blessed discourses and these noble states, or if some traveler on the Path and the road of Truth attains a spiritual opening from these words, may he not neglect this poor wretch in his thoughts and prayers but recall him in his blessed mind at the hours of prayer and during moments of retreat and not forget him -- if God, *He is exalted*, so wishes!

.....

May God, *He is sublime and exalted*, never under any circumstances separate us and all the people of Islam from the blessings of this king of religion, sultan of the people of certitude, leader of those following the mystic path, and guide to the people of Truth. And may He keep us, in this world and the world to come, among the servants of that lofty Majesty and the attendants of that elevated Threshold⁸⁷, and at the resurrection favor us with attendance upon our Shaikh so that in accordance with his words: "The answer of the subordinate is with his chief", the Shaikh may intercede for us in view of our sins and errors.

And may God fix our hearts on love of Him and destine our persons for attendance upon His friends, and not for the blinking of an eye or less abandon us to ourselves or to other creatures, and bestow upon us whatever is necessary for us in religion, the affairs of this world and the hereafter, and whatever comes from serving and loving the Shaikh and his Majesty⁸⁸, and from attachment to him – *for the sake of Moḥammad and his family, one and all.*

Praise be to the Lord of Creation and blessings be upon His prophet, Moḥammad, and upon the Prophet's family, one and all!

.....

This book was completed – with praise to God, the munificent King, and due to His fortunate support -- by the hand of the weak bondsman who is a sinner gone astray and in need of God's mercy, He is exalted, Moḥammad Šāh b. Aḡlabak b. Eybak during the midmorning hour, on Monday of the blessed month of Ramazān, in the year seven hundred and one⁸⁹.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Notes to Translator's Introduction	583
Notes to Author's Introduction	89. 586
Notes to Book One	589
Notes to Book Two, Chapter One	600
Notes to Book Two, Chapter Two	618
Notes to Anecdotes and Instructive Points	625
Notes to Book Two, Chapter Three	634
Notes to Prayers	641
Notes to Letters	641
Notes to Verses	4. 641
Notes to Book Three, Chapter One	642
Notes to Book Three, Chapter Two	0. 644
Notes to Book Three, Chapter Three	645

NOTES TO TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

1. Meyhana: the principal town in the district of Kābarān in Khorasan. The town was located about 50 miles west of Saraks, in the present day Soviet Union.
2. further afield: Ebn Ḥazm (d. 1064), writing in Spain, condemned Shaikh Abu Saʿid for one day wearing wool and the next day silk, and one day performing 1000 units of prayer and the next day none. See *al-Feṣal fi'l-Melal*, Cairo, 1913, IV. p. 188.
3. D.B. Macdonald, *The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam*, p. 163.
4. The above two paragraphs are a loose paraphrase of R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge University Press, reprint 1967, pp. 78-79.
5. "authors": Ebn-e Monavvar introduces most anecdotes with a chain of transmitters often going back to an eyewitness who was a member of the Shaikh's family or a fellow townsman. Aside from the question of the authenticity of such attributions, the original sources for the anecdotes and other material found in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* must be very diverse. Add to that the possibility that any original element may have been reworked over several generations, and the question of establishing authorship for any part of the text (other than the compiler's introduction and his occasional comments which are stylistically recognizable) becomes hopelessly entangled.
6. smaller work: The *Ḥālāt o Sokanān* is about one sixth the size of the *Asrār al-Towḥid*. See note 26, Auth. Intro.
7. Fritz Meier, *ABU SA'ID-I ABU L-HAYR, Wirklichkeit und Legende*, Acta Iranica 11, Tehran and Liège, 1976, pp. 62-64. Any references hereafter to Meier are to this work unless otherwise specified.
8. p. 77.
9. See note 15, Auth. Intro.
10. p. 89.
11. p. 87.
12. *kānaqāh*: a hospice where darvishes may stay, often presided over by a dominant Sufi shaikh who discourses before public gatherings and receives donations from the audience and other patrons for the maintenance of the premises.
13. pp. 87-90.
14. *pustān*: see note 46, Bk. I.
15. p. 98.
16. p. 100.
17. p. 101.
18. panegyric: When discoursing before an assembly, the Shaikh often cited verses which originally belonged to the realm of love poetry, epic, or panegyric. By citing the verses out of context, he was able to give a new Sufi twist to their meaning. We are told in the *Asrār al-*

Towḥid that the Shaikh did not compose these verses himself. Later tradition, however, has attributed a sizeable collection of verse compositions to Shaikh Abu Saʿid. See S. Nafisi, *Sokanān-e manẓum-e Abu Saʿid-e Abu'l-Keyr*, Tehran, 1971.

19. p. 118.
20. p. 106.
21. pp. 137.
22. p. 139.
23. pp. 154-155.
24. pp. 162-164.
25. p. thirty-four. *Asrār al-towḥid fi maqāmāt al-šeyḵ Abi Saʿid*, ed. by Moḥammad Reżā Šafīʿi-Kadkani, 2 vols., Tehran 1366, with an introduction and extensive notes and indices. The present translation is based on Šafīʿi-Kadkani's edition of the text.
26. Wind's Castle: see note 67, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
27. p. 165.
28. p. 319.
29. Jamšid... and Hāmān: see note 50, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
30. p. 167.
31. p. 168.
32. p. 318.
33. the big: see note 47, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
34. p. 268.
35. pp. 228-242.
36. See note 186, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
37. p. 239.
38. pp. 168-170.
39. p. 342.
40. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
41. p. 335.
42. See note 90, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
43. See note 131, Bk. I.
44. p. 122.
45. p. 193.
46. p. 204.
47. interrogation: see note 132, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
48. the Two Envoys: see note 133, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
49. p. 352.
50. *qebḷa*: see note 34, Auth. Intro.
51. p. 197.
52. p. 218.
53. pp. 376-377.
54. *Ḥejr*: see note 38, Instr. Points.
55. Roof Gutter: see note 39, Instr. Points.
56. *Maqām-e Ebrāhim*: see note 42, Instr. Points.
57. exalted: see note 43, Instr. Points.

Notes

58. See note 66, Bk. I.
59. p. 187.
60. Q. 5/67
61. Q. 53/10
62. p. 353.
63. *ibid.*
64. See note 131, Bk. I.
65. p. 302.
66. pp. 184-186.
67. p. 292.
68. porter's robes: see note 299, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
69. p. 263.
70. pp. 260-263.
71. Q. 3/133
72. Q. 53/17
73. p. 173.
74. pp. 280-283.
75. pp. 170-171 and pp. 171-173.
76. pp. 205-206.
77. Nur-e Bokārā: see note 223, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
78. pp. 255-257.
79. p. 255.
80. p. 64.
81. *ibid.*
82. p. 560.
83. *ibid.*
84. p. 65.
85. every year: This may refer to an annual celebration commemorating the Shaikh's death -- his 'ors.
86. p. 528.
87. p. 551.
88. p. 537.
89. *ibid.*
90. *ibid.*
91. p. 538.
92. *ibid.*
93. p. 560.
94. See Šaffī-Kadkani's notes on historical persons in Vol. II of his edition of the text.
95. Qor'ānic fascicles: see note 38, Bk. III, Chpt. 3.
96. pp. 562-564.
97. pp. 573-577.
98. Meier, p. 459.
99. pre-eternity: *azal* - eternity extending backwards in time, as distinct from *abad*, eternity extending forwards.
100. moist delicacy: See note 85, Instr. Points.

101. pp.417-418.
102. p. 249-251.
103. all by oneself: see note 214, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
104. p. 181.
105. p. 232.

NOTES TO THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

1. Q.15/26
2. the human soul: *nafs* - the concupiscent soul, the carnal soul, the source of our passions and delusions. The word *nafs* can also mean "self". Sufism generally teaches that the *nafs* is to be tamed or subdued or refined. Throughout the *Asrār al-Towhīd* we are exhorted to exterminate our *nafs* which is responsible for our having a sense of identity separate from God.
3. Q.15/29 -- Man has a special relationship to God. The mud of our impure substance has been infused with God's divine breath.
4. man, intimacy and companionship: *ensān ons va mo'ānasat* - all three of these words are derivatives of the same Arabic root.
5. There is an artificial double antithesis here characteristic of the display rhetoric Ebn-e Monavvar uses throughout the whole of his introduction: deluge/desert and shore/river. These stylistic devices stand in sharp contrast to the simple, economic style of the anecdotes and aphorisms in the *Asrār al-Towhīd*.
6. The difference between the prophet and the Friend (*vali*): prophets brought scriptural revelation to their peoples thus initiating a phase of divine law, and in that sense played an active "political" role in society. The "seal of the prophets", Moḥammad, was a religious, political and military leader. The Friend, according to Ebn-e Monavvar, is not charged with a mission which involves him in men's affairs in all these practical ways.
7. Moṣṭafā means the Chosen One and is often used by itself to designate the Prophet Moḥammad.
8. The Companions of the Prophet and members of the Prophet's family appear in the sacred history of Islam as men of sanctity who transmit the sayings of the Prophet which, along with the Qor'ān, provide Muslims with a model to follow in life.
9. beneficial sayings: *favā'id-e anfās* - benefits from the breaths. The breath exhaled by holy men confers grace and benefits. Here, by extension, the Shaikh's prayers, utterances and precepts seem to be intended. The phrase occurs in several places in the text, for instance in the heading of Book II, Chpt. 3, which contains aphorisms attributed to the Shaikh. See also note 37 of this section.

Notes

10. mystic stations: *maqāmāt* - virtues, good religious qualities. The word literally means halting stations, i.e. permanent plateaus reached in one's spiritual development, and appears frequently in the titles of biographies of holy men. *Maqāmāt* are regarded as the fruit of one's striving, unlike *aḥvāl* ("states"), which are seen as pure gifts of God's favor.
11. chains of transmission: *asānid* (pl. of *esnād*) - just as the sayings of the Prophet (*ḥadis*) are accompanied by a chain of transmitters going back to an eyewitness, the compiler assures us that the accounts about the Shaikh have been "verified" as to their chain of transmission.
12. Tent Pegs... and Pivots: *owtād* (pl. of *vataḍ*) and *aqtāb* (pl. of *qoṭb*) - the *qoṭb* or Pivot is the highest spiritual rank, followed in importance by the Tent Pegs. Both assure the ongoing operation of the natural world. See Hojviri, *The Kashf al-Mahjūb*, trans. by R.A. Nicholson, Gibb Memorial Series 17, New Edition, London 1936, p. 228.
13. supporters: *moḥebb* - a patron or admirer who is active in the world but gives material support to a Sufi shaikh. In the *Asrār al-Towḥid* the *moḥebb* is often a wealthy merchant. The *moḥebb* may also be an aspirant, one passing through a probationary period before becoming a fully-fledged *morid* (disciple).
14. disapproval: scholars of the Islamic sciences were often opposed to Sufism.
15. "this affair": *in ḥadis* - literally "this matter", "this thing". Such usage for indicating Sufism or the mystical state of Sufi shaikhs avoids outright naming and the limits inherent in direct expression. See below: *in sokaṇ*, *in ma'ni*, *in amr*.
16. the Ğozz: a representative of the Saljuq sultan Sanjar was sent to collect tribute in the form of 30,000 sheep from the Turkic Ğozz nomads who were living somewhere in the region around Balk. They refused to pay and Sanjar decided to teach them a lesson. He marched against the Ğozz tribes with his *amirs* and his whole army. The Ğozz were terrified but, in the event, they unexpectedly routed the sultan's army and succeeded in capturing Sanjar himself (1154). They then went on to plunder the greater part of Khorasan. See Rāvandi, *The Rāḥat us-Ṣudūr wa Āyat us-Surūr*, ed. by M. Iqbāl, Gibb Memorial Series, New Series 2, London 1921, p. 177-182.
17. Earth would be forced down the victim's throat until he died.
18. supporters: see note 13 of this section.
19. Q.13/41
20. the text: *naṣṣ* - the text, the words. Here the Traditions from the Prophet are intended.
21. Q.43/22
22. Q.6/90

23. The Shaikh is speaking here as if there were no numerical unit higher than one thousand (*hezār*). Presumably, the *lak* (100,000) and the *korur* (500,000) only came into usage in Persian at a later date under Indian influence.
24. See note 11 of this section.
25. Jamāl al-Din Abu Rowḥ Loṭfollāh: born before 1096 and died 1147.
26. *Hālāt o sokanān-e šeyk Abu Sa'id-e Abu'l-Keyr-e Meyhani*, ed. by V. Zhukovsky, St. Petersburg, 1899; and by Iraj-e Afšār, Tehran 1331 and 1341; and Šafī'i-Kadkani, Tehran 1366.
27. philosopher's stone: *kebrit-e aḥmar* - literally red sulphur, which was a substance used by alchemists to transform base metals into silver or gold.
28. The transmission of esoteric knowledge, symbolized by investiture with a mystic robe, is generally traced back to the Prophet Moḥammad Moṣṭafā. Besides having brought the Qor'ān, Moḥammad is conceived of as the source of an esoteric knowledge which can only be attained through spiritual initiation.
29. *Asrār al-towḥid fi maqāmāt al-šeyk Abi Sa'id*: literally -- *The Secrets of God's Mystical Oneness in the Spiritual Stations of Shaikh Abu Sa'id*. The word *towḥid*, which occurs in the title, normally refers to professing belief in the one true God, as opposed to being a polytheist (*šerk* -- setting up partners with God). In the mystic sense, *towḥid* means the realization that nothing but God has true being, and the meaning of *šerk* is extended to encompass attributing real existence to anything other than God. On polytheism in this sense, see p. 95.
30. chains of transmission: see note 11 in this section.
31. Ġiyās al-Din Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Sām of Ġur ruled (1163 - 1203) over a realm which eventually stretched from Khorasan into India. His capital city was Firuzkuh, located in Ġur, a mountainous region in central Afghanistan. He was first a supporter of the Karrāmiya (see note 33, Bk. II, Chpt. 1), then an adherent of the Ḥanafī and finally the Šāfī'i school of jurisprudence. Ebn-e Monavvar's passages proclaiming a fundamental unity between the latter two schools may be connected with the sultan's shifting allegiances. The titles in this dedication are the same as those applied to him in the introduction to the *Tafsir-e Torbat-e Jām* composed and dedicated to him in 1188. Ġiyās al-Din died in Herat, where the *Asrār al-Towḥid* may have been completed.
32. *Pleasing in Appearance to the Commander of the Faithful*: *qāsem amir al-mo'menin* - a special title meant to have been conferred by the caliph Hārūn al-Rašid on the Ġurid rulers of the House of Šansab.
33. Ka'ba: the central shrine and goal of Muslim pilgrims at Mecca. The Ka'ba is also the point of orientation for Muslim prayer which explains its metaphorical use here.

Notes

34. *qebla*: the location of the Ka'ba from wherever one is standing. The direction in which Muslims are required to pray.
35. caraway seeds to Kermān: the equivalent of carrying coals to Newcastle.
36. locust's leg before Solomon: offering a trifle to the wealthiest and most powerful ruler of all time.
37. religious precepts: *favā'id* (pl. of *fā'ida*) - benefits, favors. Here referring to the contents of the present work. The word *fā'ida* was used in the 8th century as the Arabic translation for the Greek *chreia*, the short morally instructive anecdote of the Cynics. As here, *fā'ida* sometimes seems to designate a particular genre of pithy, instructive sayings. "Collections of chreiai were part of the Cynic tradition from the earliest stages of its development. The sayings of Diogenes must have been collected soon after his death, and Metrocles, the student and contemporary of Crates (d. ca. 300 B.C.), was perhaps the first who gave the word chreiai its specific meaning of 'sayings useful for ethical conduct'." (Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation*, New Haven, Connecticut, 1975, p. 453.)
38. *Sunnat*: authentic and factitious sayings and deeds of the Prophet Moḥammad. Taken as a whole, the *Sunnat* refers to the normative and exemplary model of the Prophet but *Sunnat* may also mean a specific instance or aspect of that model. Not every *Sunnat* in the latter sense is legally binding upon a Muslim. It may simply be recommended or meritorious.
39. bearer of divine law: Prophet Moḥammad.
40. Q.54/55

NOTES TO BOOK ONE

1. By using "they" in place of "we" or "I", the Shaikh avoids affirming his own identity or Self.
2. In the Persian text which follows "we" is employed when the Shaikh speaks directly, though there are a few places where "they" remains, as if having escaped Ebn-e Monavvar's editorial intervention. In the English translation "we" is mostly translated as "I".
3. Bābu: an affectionate form of the word father.
4. Companions of the Porch: *Aṣḥāb-e ṣoffa* - originally these were close supporters of the Prophet who lived in the porch of the mosque of Medina. They represented an ideal of virtue and piety. A popular false etymology derives *Ṣufi* from the word *ṣoffa*. Consequently, the expression here means Sufis.
5. December 7th, 967.
6. esteemed: *'azizān* - dear ones, the spiritually esteemed, people devoted to the mystic path. From the mystic point of view "one of us".

7. the mystic community: *in ṭāyefa* - "this band, group, people", meaning the mystic community. *In ṭāyefa* and *ʿaziz* occur frequently throughout the *Asrār al-Towḥid* and belong to the standard jargon of Sufism.
8. *samāʿ*: literally – listening, hearing. Specifically it refers to listening to singing or recitations which may be accompanied by music and inspire those present to dance. It was frequently condemned by conservative religious authorities as indecent. The verses sung were often erotic and the dancing, since young boys might take part, could have homosexual overtones. At times the participants appear to be overwhelmed by ecstasy and experience a loss of self-control. See Marijan Molé, "La danse ecstasique en Islam", in *Les danses sacrées*, Paris 1963, pp. 147-280.
9. gaze of the darvishes: when in a state of ecstasy while performing the *samāʿ*, their glance is especially grace-bestowing. See Meier, p. 219. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Meier are to: Fritz Meier, *ABU SAʿID-I ABU L-HAYR, Wirklichkeit und Legende*, Acta Iranica 11, Tehran and Liège, 1976.
10. Friendship: *velāyat* - as well as having the spiritual meaning of Friendship with God, can also mean an appointment to office.
11. Sultan Maḥmud ruled an extensive realm, including Khorasan, from his capital, Ġazna or Ġaznin, in Afghanistan. He was renowned for his repeated invasions of India and his fabulous wealth. However, he only ascended the throne in the year 998 when the Shaikh was already in his 30's. The anecdote aptly illustrates how chronology may be ignored for the sake of a good story.
12. Qorʾānic reciters: *qorʾāʾ* (the pl. of *qāreʿ*) - an expert in the science of *qerʾāt*, Qorʾānic recitation. But for the pejorative meaning see p. 216 and note 156, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
13. Buʿl-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin (d. 990): a scholar of Traditions from the Prophet, as well as a mystic and poet. Little else is known about him other than what is found in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* where he appears as the first of Shaikh Abu Saʿid's spiritual preceptors. The *Ḥālāt o Soḡanān* (see note 26, Auth. Intro.) reports that the Shaikh did not compose poetry himself but most of the poems he cited were composed by Buʿl-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin.
14. spiritual domain: *velāyat* - the office of Friend of God who, amongst other things, looks after the darvishes spiritually and materially.
15. the seal upon "this affair": *katm-e in ḥadis* - the Prophet Moḥammad was the "seal of the prophets", i.e. chosen by God to be the last and the greatest of their number. See the Qorʾānic verse 33/40 where the expression occurs. In the same way the Shaikh is destined to be the final great revealer of mystic truth. For "this affair" see note 15, Auth. Intro. As an early precedent for such a "recognition scene", it may be noted that Ebn Saʿd and Ebn Hešām present a tradition about the young Moḥammad (nine or twelve years old) in which, while ac-

accompanying the Meccans' caravan to Syria, he meets the Christian monk or hermit, Bāḥirā. The latter declares, on the basis of manifest physical signs on the boy, that he is destined to be the "seal of the prophets". See Bāḥirā, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, and W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman*, Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 1-2.

16. expounder of religious law: *mofti* - a jurisconsult, someone qualified to pronounce a *fatvā*, a legal judgement concerning matters of religious jurisprudence.
17. behavior: *mo'āmalā* - actions in daily life which are regulated by the *ṣarī'at* (religious law), exclusive of *'ebādat* - worship.
18. *me'rāj*: the Prophet's ascension from Jerusalem to the seven heavens during his lifetime.
19. philosopher's stone: *kimiya* - alchemy; the means of changing base metals into gold.
20. The year 990.
21. Marv: an ancient city of Khorasan whose foundation goes back several centuries before the Christian era. Having become an important intellectual and commercial center after the Arab conquest, Marv served as the capital of the Saljuq Turks during the 11th century. The city never recovered from the devastation caused by the invasions of the Ğozz (1154) and the Mongols (1221).
22. pre-Islamic verse: Arabic poetry composed before the advent of Islam and studied for its purity of language.
23. jurisconsult: *mofti*, see note 16 of this section.
24. Our companions: here refers to adherents of the Šāfe'i school of jurisprudence.
25. Šāfe'i-ye Moṭṭalebi (d. 820): one of the greatest Islamic scholars in the domain of religious jurisprudence and the study of Traditions from the Prophet. He is one of the four Imams of Sunni Islam and founder of the school of jurisprudence which bears his name. Traditions from the Prophet (*ḥadis*) play an authoritative role in the Šāfe'i-*mazhab* whose adherents are often referred to as *Aṣḥāb al-ḥadis*, the Partisans of *ḥadis*.
26. Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ḥoṣri (d. 982): reading Ḥoṣri for Ḥẓri. Al-Ḥoṣri was a mystic who lived and died in Baghdad and whose change of allegiance from the Ḥanafī to the Šāfe'i school of jurisprudence is also mentioned by 'Aṭṭār in the *Tazkerat al-Owliyā*.
27. Abu Yazid Ṭeyfur-e Bastāmi (d. 874?): one of the most celebrated of Iranian mystics. Joneyd wrote a commentary on his utterances, portions of which are preserved in the *Ketāb al-Loma'* of Sarrāj. The fullest source for his life and sayings is the *Ketāb al-nur fi kalemāt Abi Yazid Ṭeyfur* by Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad al-Sahlagi (d. 1084). Bāyazid is particularly famous for his theopathic utterances (*ṣaḥīyāt*) which scandalized his contemporaries, e.g., "Glory be to Me! How great is My majesty"; "I am the Throne and the Footstool"; "I am the

- Well-preserved Tablet*". See Hellmut Ritter, "Die Aussprüche des Bāyezīd Bisṭāmī", in *Westöstliche Abhandlungen*, Rudolf Tschudi zum 70. Geburtstag, Wiesbaden 1954, pp. 231-243.
28. Abu Ḥanifa (d. 765): founder of one of the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence. He employed a certain degree of speculative rationality in his methodology which is why his adherents are often referred to as *Aṣḥāb-e ra'y* -- the Partisans of opinion or individual judgement.
 29. Ja'far-e Ṣādeq (d. 765): sixth Imam of the Shiites. He is reputed to have had contacts with numerous Sufis, although it is chronologically impossible for Bāyazīd to have been his disciple. He lived a quiet life in Medina as a transmitter of *ḥadīṣ* and a teacher of *feqh*. On his death, the majority of the Shiites accepted his son Musā as Imam and this community eventually developed into the Twelver Ṣī'a. Another group recognized his grandson Moḥammad b. Esmā'il as the Imam. This group formed the nucleus of the later Esmā'iliya (Esmā'ilis).
 30. Q.32/78
 31. party zeal: *ta'aṣṣob* -- fanaticism, party factionalism which was a major problem in cities in the Islamic world throughout the centuries. During the second half of the 12th century, Nishapur was virtually laid waste by Ṣāfe'i-Ḥanafī factional fighting. The real situation should be borne in mind when considering passages like this which appeal for tolerance. See Richard W. Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur*, Harvard University Press, 1972.
 32. Abu Moḥammad-e Darāvardī (died first decade of the 9th century): a scholar of Traditions from the Prophet. His *nesbat* is taken from the village Darāvard in Khorasan where his family originated.
 33. Mālek b. Anas (d. 795): founder of one of the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence.
 34. Moṣṭafā: the Prophet Moḥammad. See note 7, Auth. Intro.
 35. Tradition: *Sunnat*. See note 38, Auth. Intro.
 36. Beṣr, the Barefoot: Beṣr b. Ḥāreṣ b. 'Alī-ye Marvazī (d. 841) was an ascetic from Khorasan who lived and died in Baghdad. Some of his sayings are transmitted in the *Ḥelyat al-Owliyā'* of Abu No'eym and 'Aṭṭār's *Tazkerat al-Owliyā'*.
 37. Q.71/19
 38. carpet: it is generally viewed as improper to walk on a carpet while wearing one's shoes.
 39. animal soul: *nafs*. See note 2, Auth. Intro.
 40. Rightly Guided Caliphs: the first four caliphs are known as *al-rāṣedun* (the upright, the rightly guided), since they had been companions of the Prophet during his lifetime and were renowned for their piety and righteous conduct.

41. Agreement and Controversy: *mottaḥaq o moktalaḥ* - points of agreement and divergence amongst the schools of jurisprudence, in particular the schools of Šāḥe'i and Abu Ḥanifa.
42. Imam Abu Bakr-e Qaffāl-e Marvazi: Abu Bakr 'Abdollāh b. Aḥmad al-Qaffāl (d. 1026), known as Qaffāl the Younger to distinguish him from Abu Bakr-e Qaffāl-e Čāči, had originally been a locksmith (*qaffāl*) before starting to study Traditions at an adult age. His teaching attracted some of the greatest future scholars of Khorasan, men like Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, Qāzi Ḥoseyn-e Marv-e Rudi and Abu 'Ali-ye Senji.
43. Imam Abu 'Ali Zāher b. Aḥmad al-Faqih (d. 999): was a famous learned jurist (*faqih*) and traditionist.
44. Mo'tazelites: adherents of a speculative, rational theology which the conservative, more literalist Aš'arite theologians condemned as heresy. Mo'tazelites held that the Qor'ān was created, that God has no eternal attributes distinct from His essence, that God cannot be seen, not even in the afterlife, because that would imply his corporeality, and that God's "hand", "face", etc., as referred to in the Qor'ān, must be understood allegorically, e.g., as "grace", "essence", and there is a choice in human activity. The Aš'arites took up opposite positions on these questions. For instance, God's hand and face were considered to be real attributes but their precise nature is unknown to us. As for man's freedom to choose, God is omnipotent and creates in man the will and power to act. At this time in Khorasan Mo'tazelites were often allied with the Ḥanafi school of jurisprudence, whereas many Aš'arites were associated with the Šāḥe'i school.
45. *Šārestān*: the original part of a city, located within the city walls and distinct from the citadel (*qohandez*) and the suburbs (*rabaž*).
46. fur cloak: *pustin* - skin with the animal's wool or fur still attached to it. The garment was characteristic of persons who have abandoned the world and adopted a life of poverty.
47. wise madmen: *'oqalā-ye majānin* - a category of holy man like Ma'šūq (see p. 133). Loqmān of Saraks is first mentioned in the *Kašf al-Maḥjub* of Hojviri and appears in several works of 'Aṭṭār (see Hellmut Ritter, *Das meer der seele*, Second Edition, Leiden 1978, index: Loqmān). For this category of holy man in general, see Akbār *'oqalā' al-majānin* of Abu'l-Qāsem al-Ḥasan b. Moḥammad al-Naišāburi (d. 1015-16), ed. by Wajih Fāris al-Kilāni, Egypt, 1924, and P. Loosen's "Die weisen Narren des Naišābūri", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, XXVII (Strassburg 1912), 184-229.
48. Bu'l-Faḥl-e Ḥasan: Abu'l-Faḥl Moḥammad b. Ḥasan-e Saraksī (d. last decade of the 10th century?) was the disciple of Abu Naṣr-e Sarraj-e Ṭusi (see note 54 of this section).
49. from the corner of his eye: *be-par-e čašm* - a look of disdain, a look which accords no importance to a person.

50. *soffa*: normally a porch to sit under or a raised platform for sitting on set into a recess, but here and elsewhere in the *Asrār al-Towhīd* it appears to mean a room in the *kānaqāh* where Sufis sit together.
51. fascicle: *jozv/joz'* - particularly in *ḥadīṣ* studies, a small work of collected *ḥadīṣ* dealing with one topic, e.g., praying at night, fasting, a minor ritual ablution, etc.
52. Q.6/91
53. The *pir-e ṣoḥbat* gives the devotee guidance on the path of purgation but does not necessarily confer on him a mystic robe (*kerqa*). Shaikh Abu Sa'īd is represented as having received two mystic robes, one from Solami (p. 100) and the other from Bu'l-'Abbas-e Qaṣṣāb (pp. 117-118). Formulating a spiritual genealogy which goes back to the Prophet and 'Ali, the only person meant to have received esoteric knowledge from the Prophet Moḥammad, is an attempt to provide Sufism with a legitimate Islamic pedigree. This is not to say that Sufis themselves were not sincerely convinced that such a genealogy was authentic.
54. Shaikh Bu Naṣr-e Sarrāj (d. 988): Abu Naṣr 'Abdollāh b. 'Ali al-Sarrāj al-Ṭusi associated with several famous mystics of his day and was the disciple of Ebn-e Kafīf. He is the author of the important work on Sufism in Arabic, *The Kitāb al-Luma' fi'l-Taṣawwuf* -- ed. by R.A. Nicholson in the Gibb Memorial Series 22, London-Leiden, 1914.
55. Joneyd: Abu'l-Qāsem al-Joneyd b. Moḥammad b. al-Joneyd al-Kazzāz al-Qavāriri was the nephew and disciple of Sari-ye Saqāṭi. He lived in Baghdad where he studied law under Abu Towr and associated with Ḥāreṣ-e Moḥāsebi. Along with Moḥāsebi he is accounted the greatest orthodox exponent of the "sober" type of Sufism (*ṣaḥv* = sobriety) and stands in contrast to extravagant, intoxicated figures like Bāyazīd-e Bastāmi and Ḥallāj. By his self-control and clear, balanced perception Joneyd laid the foundation on which later systems of Sufism were built. Some of his *rasā'el* survive, consisting of letters to private persons and tracts on mystic themes, in particular on the meanings of *towhīd*. See Dr. Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd*, London, 1962.
56. The three early figures, Ḥasan of Basra (d. 728), Ḥabīb-e 'Ajami (d. 772), and Dā'ud-e Ṭā'ī (d. 778) were ascetics and pietists. Ma'ruf-e Karkī (d. 815) was born of Christian parents and was allegedly initiated by 'Ali b. Musā al-Reżā, the 8th Shiite Imam. Sari-ye Saqāṭi (d. 865), Joneyd (d. 910), and al-Morta'eś (d. 940) are equally famous mystics associated with Baghdad. The deeds and aphorisms of all these figures regularly feature in Sufi literature.
57. *šārestān*: see note 45 of this section.
58. *soffa*: see note 50 of this section.
59. 'mystic knowledge': *ma'refat* - gnosis, direct intuitive knowledge of God.

Notes

60. flew: this passage seems to be the starting point for the figure of Lokmân-i Perende in the later Turkish Bektâşî legend. See Meier, p. 411.
61. religious knowledge: *'elm* - science, knowledge, in particular religious learning. *'Elm* and *ma'refat* are commonly contrasted with one another in Sufi thought.
62. serving your mother: not a unique form of service. Bâyezîd-e Bastâmi (d. 874?) spent much time practicing this form of spiritual discipline.
63. major ritual ablution: *ğosl* - complete washing of the entire body with pure water, as opposed to the partial washing (*vozu*) prescribed before performing the prayers.
64. maund: *mann* - a weight which has varied in accordance with time and place. Today in Iran it is roughly 3 kilos.
65. innermost conscience: *serr* - secret, mystery, but also innermost heart, heart of hearts.
66. *Kezr*: the supernatural spiritual guide who appears to special aspirants on the mystic path.
67. Edris: the biblical Enoch.
68. Q.19/57
69. *farsangs* (also in the Arabicized form *farsak*): parasang, originally (as mentioned in Herodotus and Xenophon) a Persian measure indicating the distance one could travel in one hour and that would vary with the nature of the terrain, but in Islamic times a *farsang* came to be fixed at about 6 kilometers.
70. *rak'at*: a unit of prayer involving prayer formulae accompanied by a sequence of different body postures, bending forward, kneeling, etc.
71. *rebât*: a hospice outside town where travelers or the needy could put up. The Shaikh frequents *rebâts* by way of seeking isolation from the world. They are ideal places for performing ascetic disciplines. See the *Rebât* of the Cemetery a few lines below.
72. spiritual contraction: *vaqt basta bud* - the moment was bound, shut. This is the same as *qabz* -- constriction, spiritual blockage or depression -- which will be mentioned later. The presence of mud seems to suggest or trigger the spiritual mood. *Bast*, or spiritual expansion, is the opposite to *qabz*.
73. Jinn: jinnee -- in Muslim folk belief, spirits of supernatural power who can assume different shapes, animal, human, etc. Their bodies are composed of vapor or flame, whereas the other two classes of beings, man and angels, are created from clay and light, respectively. The Prophet Moḥammad was sent to guide them, as well as mankind, to salvation. Belief in the Jinn is mandated in the Qor'ân.
74. sanctified sepulchral shrine: *mašhad-e moqaddas* - the Shaikh had a tomb built for himself during his lifetime (as a prince might do) and used the building for, amongst other things, speaking before assemblies. After his death, he was buried there and it became a famous

- pilgrimage shrine where members of his family maintained the ritual observances of his cult.
75. dinar: a gold coin. Though the relationship varied at different times, there were often 20 dirhems (a silver coin) to the dinar.
 76. *dāng*: 1/6th of a dinar or a dirhem. Here no doubt 1/6th of a dirhem is intended -- a small sum of money.
 77. you-know-not-what-from-Meyhana: *tu madān-e meyhanagi* - a compound phrase made from the negative imperative (*madān*). Literally a-you-don't-have-to-know from Meyhana. This is the Shaikh's way of telling his father: you won't understand. See article by Fritz Meier in *Oriens*, 27-28, 1981, p. 126.
 78. Shaikh Bu 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Solami (d. 1021): a famous mystic of Nishapur and author of numerous works on Sufism in Arabic. The most important of those which have survived are: the *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣufiyya* (*The Classes of the Leading Sufis*), which deals with the lives of earlier Sufi figures and forms the basis of Jāmi's *Nafahāt al-Ons*; the *Ḥaqqā'eq al-Tafsir*, an important Sufi commentary on the Qor'ān which cites the interpretations of earlier well-known Sufis; the *Resālat al-Malāmātiyya*, a primary source for the spiritual group known as the Malāmatis who deliberately acted in such a way as to incur blame; and the *Ketāb al-Fotovva* concerning the concept of *fotovvat*, an altruistic, chivalrous code of behavior (see note 38, Bk. II, Chpt. 3). For further information on the importance of Solami's works, see *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣufiyya*, texte arabe avec une introduction et un index par Johannes Pedersen, Leiden 1960, especially p. 19 et seq., and Richard Hartmann's article on the *Resālat al-Malāmātiyya* in *Der Islam* VIII, 1918, p. 157-203.
 79. Naṣrābādi (d. 977): a famous mystic of Nishapur. He takes his *nesbat* from the neighborhood of Naṣrābād in Nishapur. Towards the end of his life, he settled in Mecca where he died.
 80. Šebli (d. 945): one of the most famous Sufis of Baghdad. He was especially renowned for the intensity of his ecstatic states (see p. 396). He associated with Joneyd and was a friend of Ḥallāj whom he is said to have publicly denied while honoring him in private. After Ḥallāj's execution he was committed to a madhouse because of his extreme forms of behavior, such as putting salt in his eyes and abstaining from sleep for great lengths of time. In the classical Sufi *selsela* he is presented as the link between Joneyd and Naṣrābādi. His tomb is still to be seen today in the A'zamiya district of Baghdad.
 81. For Joneyd, Sari and Ma'ruf-e Karkī, see notes 55 and 56 of this section.
 82. It is noteworthy that after Ma'ruf-e Karkī the chain of spiritual transmission which runs back to the Prophet, consists of the Shiite Imams.
 83. Q.6/62

Notes

84. incorporeal beings: *ruḥāniyān* - angels for instance, but from the context it would here seem to mean those who have purified themselves of *nafs* and subsist in *ruh* – spirit.
85. the eighteen thousand worlds: one of the most common figures given for the number of existing worlds. For alternative figures and a discussion of the subject, see Šafī'i-Kadkani's edition of the text, p. 482.
86. written down: study consisted, to a great extent, in a student writing down what his teacher dictated to him, in particular the Traditions of the Prophet.
87. Oḥod: the battle of Oḥod took place March 23rd 625 at the foot of Mt. Oḥod. The Prophet Moḥammad was wounded but escaped with his life.
88. *Sonnat*: see note 38, Auth. Intro.
89. Q.2/137
90. Literally: conceit is in religion and religion comes after religious law.
91. effaced: made the darkness *nā-čiz*, i.e. non-thing, with no material existence.
92. Q.41/53
93. Q.21/35
94. Baghdad, the Arab city, is transformed into Bokhara, the city of Iranian culture. Wherever the great Iranian prince goes, victory and good fortune (*piruzi*) follow. Where God enters, a felicitous transformation occurs. The line may come from a panegyric poem originally composed for a 10th century Sāmānid ruler, when Bokhara was the capital of the extensive Sāmānid dominion.
95. sepulchral shrine: see note 74 of this section.
96. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
97. Q.2/245 -- *qabḏ* and *bast*: tightening and expanding. See note 72 of this section.
98. Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb: Abu'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Moḥammad. b. 'Abd al-Karīm (d. last decade of the 10th century?) was a famous Iranian mystic who, despite being illiterate and originally a butcher by trade, counted several great Sufi figures amongst his devotees, men like Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, Abu l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni and Abu 'Abdollāh-e Dāstāni.
99. difficulty: *andiša* - thought, care, dilemma and here, in particular, a spiritual problem. The word *vāqe'a* occurs at the end of the anecdote with the same meaning: "My difficulty was solved by this old man..."
100. "this higher meaning": the same as "this affair". See note 15, Auth. Intro.
101. much honor: *kaḥat-hā* - they were honored by having visited the tomb. This is not *kaḥat* in the sense of an honorific robe.
102. The name of the village could be construed as the imperative of the verb *andar māndan*: to become stuck, be helpless, be in distress.

103. Ostād Abu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq (d. 1015): a famous Iranian mystic. He was the *pir* and father-in-law of Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri. For the latter, see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
104. Reading *gebābi*, not *qabā'i*, the latter meaning under My cloak.
105. *soffa*: see note 50 of this section.
106. *farsangs*: see note 69 of this section.
107. Bu 'Osmān-e Hiri (d. 910) was originally from Rey. He settled in Nishapur, in the district of Hira, and is credited with being one of the first figures to spread Sufism in that city.
108. Al-Solami: see note 78 of this section.
109. 'Olyān: for a discussion of the form and vocalization of this name see note on p. 719 of Šaff'i-Kadkani's edition of the text. Some have taken it to be a diminutive, others a dual form, etc.
110. the Sufis' debts: see numerous anecdotes in Book II dealing with how a spiritual leader such as Shaikh Abu Sa'id incurs debts on behalf of his Sufi followers and then manages to get his benefactors to pay them off.
111. Q.28/35
112. preoccupied with a difficulty: *vāqe'a dar piš bud* - see note 99 of this section.
113. fur cloak: see note 46 of this section.
114. *rak'ats*: see note 70 of this section.
115. the bondsman and the hireling: a thematic contrast. One serves God with no self-interest; the other seeks Paradise as his reward. For a related thought, see p. 80 where Bešr-e Yāsin teaches the young Abu Sa'id verses about the perfect friend.
116. the Ġozz: see note 16, Auth. Intro.
117. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
118. *Tafsir-e Haqā'eq* (= *Haqā'eq al-Tafsir*): one of the earliest and most influential Sufi commentaries on the Qor'ān. It was composed by Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami (see note 78 of this section) and contains the comments of many earlier Sufi masters about different Qor'ānic verses.
119. *Fāteḥa*: the opening chapter of the Qor'ān.
120. Q.6/91 This is the Qor'ānic verse which had such a powerful effect on the Shaikh earlier (see p. 90).
121. The Shaikh's use of this odd expression and the variation on it a few lines below is simply an indirect way of dismissing his father's question. See note 77 of this section.
122. fascicle: see note 51 of this section.
123. Q.56/24
124. difficulty: see note 99 of this section.
125. See note 178, Bk.II, Chpt. 1 on Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni, and pp. 228-242 for the account of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's visit to him in Karaqān.
126. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
127. Shaikh Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni: see note 178, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.

Notes

128. Celestial Throne 'arš - God's throne, symbolically located in the empyrean.
129. *I am the Truth: ana'l-ḥaqq* - the famous saying of Ḥoseyn b. Maṣṣur al-Ḥallāj which the conservative authorities condemned as blasphemous. He was executed in the year 922.
130. *Glory be to me: šobḥāni* - the usual form of the exclamation is "glory be to God". This theopathic variation is attributed to Bāyazīd-e Bastāmi (see note 27 of this section).
131. This robe or the robe, i.e. not "inside my robe". The absence of "my" is indicative of the Shaikh's loss of Self. See Meier, p. 87, footnote 38.
132. Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh al-Ṭabari: not known from other sources. Joreyri (d. 923): learned disciple of Joneyd and his *jā-nešin* or successor among Joneyd's followers. With regard to the other figures in Qaṣṣāb's spiritual lineage, see note 56 of this section.
133. acts of the spirit came to pass: *kār-hā padid āmad* - the Shaikh's public career begins.
134. this butcher's son: Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb (the butcher) was the son of a butcher and trained as a butcher himself. See note 98 of this section.
135. chivalrous heroes: *javānmardān* - young men who follow principles of behavior based on notions of generosity and altruism. This idealistic code was vaguely similar to that of European chivalry and closely associated with Sufism. Here the code of behavior is equated with the exemplary life of the Prophet Moḥammad. See the section of the *Qābus-nāma* dealing with *javānmardi* and Sufism (trans. by Reuben Levy, Cresset Press 1951).
136. device of old ladies: *ālat-e pir-e zanān* - if the text is sound, the expression forms an antithesis to the behavior of chivalrous heroes.
137. Abu 'Abdollāh-e Dāstāni (d. 1026): a mystic related by family ties to Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni. For Karaqāni, see note 178, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
138. allusion and direct designation: *ešārat* and 'ebārat - a common contrast in the repertoire of Sufism.
139. 'this higher meaning': *in ma'ni* = *in ḥadis*, *in soḵan*, etc. See note 15, Auth. Intro.
140. Q.46/15
141. Q.19/12
142. Q.19/29
143. Q.76/1
144. Adam's frame: according to this myth, the "fetid mud" (see p. 61), i.e. man's material substance, acquired all its impurities during this period.
145. Q.76/2
146. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
147. Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq: see note 103 of this section.
148. MS variant: '...in his mustache!'
149. The *qabz* he was experiencing changed to *bast*. See note 72 of this section.

150. Pir Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan: see note 48 of this section.
151. acquit yourself of your pledge: literally – so that you reach your goal, in order to fulfill your intention. The Shaikh is boldly declaring that performing a pilgrimage to the tomb of Pir Bu'l-Faḏl is equivalent to going on pilgrimage to Mecca. The circumambulation corresponds to the same rite performed by pilgrims round the Ka'ba at Mecca.
152. January 12th, 1049.
153. high aspiration: *hemmat* - a term which, as here, may specifically mean the spiritual powers a holy man possesses. See *Die Fawā'id al-ḡamāl wa fawā'id al-ḡalāl des Naḡm ad-din al-Kubrā, Eine Darstellung mystischer Erfahrungen im Islam aus der Zeit um 1200 n. Chr.*, edited and annotated by Fritz Meier, Wiesbaden 1957, p. 222 and index: himma.

NOTES TO BOOK TWO, CHAPTER ONE.

1. Nishapur: one of the largest cities in the Middle East during Abu Sa'id's lifetime. Nishapur was particularly important as a commercial hub, being strategically situated on the east-west trade routes, and was a flourishing cultural center which attracted scholars and men of letters from all over the province of Khorasan and other parts of Iran. For a description of the city around the time of Abu Sa'id's youth see the *Aḥsan al-Taḳāsim* of the geographer al-Maqdesi (wrote circa 985), and in general, Bulliet's *Patricians*, and his article, "Medieval Nishapur" in *Studia Iranica*, 1976.
2. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk.I.
3. Ṭabarān: the city of Ṭus was made up of two parts, Ṭabarān and Nowqān. See a few lines below: "Ma'ṣūq resided in the city of Ṭus..." Ṭus was the birth place of many famous literary figures and men of learning. Ferdowsi (d. early 11th century), who composed the national epic, *The Book of Kings*, and Moḥammad-e Ḡazzālī (d. 1111), author of *The Revivification of the Religious Sciences*, are buried there.
4. Ma'ṣūq: see note 47, Bk. I, on wise madmen. He is first referred to in Hojviri, and appears in several of 'Aṭṭār's works, as well as in the letters of 'Eyn al-Qoḏāt, not to mention several later writers.
5. spiritual domain: *velāyat* - (see note 10, Bk. I). Abu Sa'id is here portrayed as asking a famous wise madman for permission to enter his domain of spiritual authority, whereas when the Shaikh approaches Nishapur, where he will meet with his most serious opponents, he makes no such gesture before the established religious authorities. One obvious implication is that the Shaikh defers, at least in the anecdote if not in real life, to the ecstatic "outsider" rather than to the conservative establishment.

Notes

6. music of pomp and rank: *nowbat* - music played by a military band before the residence of a governing official. Being a ceremony of governmental prestige and status, it is here used in a figurative sense. Ma'šūq is predicting the Shaikh's coming success as a spiritual "ruler" in Nishapur. Perhaps there is even an allusion to the *samā'* which will take place in the Shaikh's *kānaqāh*.
7. al-Sarrāj: see note 54, Bk. I.
8. the roof: *bām* - a flat roof overlooking the inner courtyard and where the women who attended the assembly sat apart from the men.
9. Abu 'Ali Ḥasan Neẓām al-Molk (d. 1092): was born in 1019 in Rādkān, a village near Ṭus, where his father was a tax official for the Ġaznavids. Neẓām al-Molk first served as vezier for Alp Arslān and after the latter's death (1072) became Malekšāh's vezier, though by then he is thought to have exercised the real power in place of the sultan. As part of his political policy, he patronized religious learning, as well as Sufis. In 1091 he composed the *Siyāsat-nāma*, a work intended to be a guide to government for princes. The following year he added eleven chapters which deal with the dangers to the state presented particularly by the Esmā'ilis. Neẓām al-Molk was murdered near Seḥna while the court was *en route* from Isfahan to Baghdad. His murderer, disguised as a Sufi, was thought to be an agent of Ḥasan-e Šabbāḥ. Neẓām al-Molk appears in several anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*.
10. I can see you: apparently she will simply catch a glimpse of him on the roof as she passes below. A glimpse of the beloved in a society where the sexes are strictly segregated, is an erotically charged moment and is regularly represented as such within the conventions of Persian love poetry.
11. the bondsman: *banda* - "the slave", "bondsmen", "servant (of God)" is a common way of referring to Muslims or people in general.
12. Robes cast off would normally be cut into pieces and kept by those present as grace-bestowing souvenirs of an inspired spiritual occasion. Or, as in this case, a benefactor might redeem them, that is, buy them back with money or a banquet, and return them to their original owners. See elsewhere in *Asrār al-Towḥid* and p. 418 of *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, trans. by R.A. Nicholson.
13. Abu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni (d. 1076): a famous Sufi shaikh living in Ṭus. His name has often been erroneously transcribed as Gorgāni, whereas he was born in the village of Korrakān near Ṭus. He had many well-known disciples such as Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi who appears on pp. 300-304 as seeking his guidance.
14. seventy thousand: an image for the vast extent of God's creation. My translation follows Meier's interpretation (see footnote on p. 454 of his book). Šafi'i-Kadkani, in the commentary of his edition of the text, translates: "if seventy thousand didn't appear..., and seventy

thousand didn't pass away!" The verb *rasidan* can have the different meanings: to arrive, to come to an end (die), and to suffice, be enough.

15. 'Adani Kuyān Street: 'adani is a kind of cloth produced in Nishapur and exported. Kuyān is the same as kubān in standard Persian, i.e. beaters, fullers, who prepare the cloth, but Šafi'i-Kadkani argues against the MS spelling being a scribal error and retains this form of the word as representing the local Nishapuri pronunciation.
16. Bu 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi: See Meier, p. 423, for a discussion about whether this is the same person as 'Ali-ye Ṭarsusi, the Shaikh's father-in-law.
17. beginning all over again: *az sar dar gereftan* - to begin with the head or at the beginning. The Shaikh's remark has a double meaning. He is starting out anew in the city of Nishapur.
18. Maḥmud: there is a pun based on Maḥmud-e Morid's name evoking the all-powerful Sultan Maḥmud of Ġazna. If the greatest leader removes his hat out of respect for me, I have nothing to fear from anyone else (here in Nishapur).
19. Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri (d. 1072): one of the most renowned scholars and writers on Sufism of this period. He appears in several anecdotes throughout the *Asrār al-Towḥid* and, because of his prestige, is the most important single spiritual figure whom the anecdotes portray in relation to Shaikh Abu Sa'id. Qoṣeyri's best known work, *al-Resālat al-Qoṣeyriya fi 'elm al-taṣavvuf*, written 1045-46, presents the sayings and ideas of earlier famous Sufis in a conciliatory manner, i.e. Sufism is conceived of as based on the strict observance of Islamic religious law. Due to persecution on the part of the Ḥanafī jurists and Saljuq officials, Qoṣeyri was absent from Nishapur from 1048 to 1063. He was married to Fāṭema, the daughter of Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq (see note 103, Bk. I). She appears in an anecdote on p. 161. For Qoṣeyri's views, see Richard Hartmann, *Al-Kuschairis Darstellung des Sufitums*, Berlin 1914, and Richard Gramlich, *Das Sendschreiben al-Quṣayris über das Sufitum*, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert, Wiesbaden 1989.
20. I: in the text *iṣān* occurs, i.e. they (say) and seems to be an instance of the Shaikh speaking of himself in the 3rd person plural which has escaped the compiler's editorial intervention. See p. 75.
21. *Kamā*: Meier suggests truffles as a possible meaning for this obscure word. In any case, the Shaikh takes the words *Kamā va hama ne'mati* as homonyms for: "Be diminished and what remains is all *ne'mati*: grace, delicious, a delicacy." The verses which follow complement the idea of *ne'mati*.
22. what was in the person's heart: the Shaikh reads the mind of members of the audience. This "gift" of *ferāsat* -- penetrating insight or clairvoyance -- is the miraculous power which he and many other spiritual masters were most commonly credited with.
23. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.

Notes

24. God's servants: see note 11 of this section.
25. religious learning: *'ilm*. It is a common motif in Sufi thought that formal learning alone is not sufficient to enable one to draw close to God. On the other hand, opponents of Sufism regularly condemned Sufis for not having had a formal religious education. See note 61, Bk. I.
26. Ṭabarestān: a region of Iran lying along the Caspian Sea, today known as Māzandarān. Its capital city was Āmol.
27. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
28. an Arab or Torkomān: Arab or Turkish nomads.
29. *rak'ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
30. cleanse himself after easing nature: *estenjā'* - one might wonder why this ritual cleansing is done "behind a dune" in view of the fact that the Shaikh is supposedly all alone in the desert. The anecdote about Qoṣeyri on pp. 154-155 illustrates how one must always: "*Feel shame before those who see you, though you do not see them.*"
31. the prayer of custom, etc.: *sonnat*, *farīza* and *qāmat*. Some prayers have the sanction of custom (*Sonnat*) but are not binding as in the case of prayers of obligation (*farīza*). The *qāmat* is the second call to prayers by the muezzin and includes the words *qad qāmat al-ṣalāt*, whence it takes its name. See p. 150 where the Shaikh provokes Qāzi Ṣā'ed by leaving the mosque without reciting the prayer of custom.
32. to bring me new clothes: a sign of having undergone a spiritual change.
33. Abu Bakr-e Eshāq-e Karrāmi (d. 1030): Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. Eshāq b. Maḥmaṣād was the leader of the Karrāmiya, a religious sect founded by Abu 'Abdollāh Moḥammad b. Karrām (d. 869). The sect flourished in the central and eastern parts of the Islamic world and especially in the Iranian regions, from the 9th century to the Mongol invasions. The founder, Abu 'Abdollāh, was from Sejestān and had been successful preaching to the lower classes, particularly in rural areas and amongst weavers. Most of our knowledge of the Karrāmiya comes to us through the eyes of opponents of the sect. The salient features of their doctrines were literalism with regard to the Qor'ān and anthropomorphism: God has a body finite in certain directions when He comes into contact with the throne -- such was the Karrāmi interpretation of the much discussed Qor'ānic verse 20/5: "*the Merciful sits upon the throne...*" Abu Bakr-e Eshāq's family was the mainstay of the Karrāmis in Nishapur who temporarily enjoyed ascendancy over their opponents because of the support of Saboktegin and his son Maḥmud of Ġazna. The Karrāmis had their own *madrasas*, as well as *kānaqāhs* with sessions of *zehr*.
34. Qāzi Ṣā'ed (Abu'l-'Alā' Ṣā'ed b. Moḥammad): the chief judge of Nishapur and leader of the *Aṣḥāb al-ra'y*, i.e. the adherents of "personal judgement" or the Ḥanafi school of jurisprudence (see note 28,

- Bk. I). It is not clear why he is here referred to as chief of the *ravāfeẓ* (defectors), a pejorative term for the Shiites.
35. *samāʿ*: see note 8, Bk. I.
 36. Ġaznin: same as Ġazna, the capital city of the Ġaznavid Empire which, until the battle of Dandānqān (see note 231 of this section), included Nishapur and all of Khorasan.
 37. *raṭl*: half a *mann*. Both these measures varied at different times and in different places. See note 64, Bk. I.
 38. means: *maʿlūm* - "known". A term for anything of value, means, wherewithal. A Sufi should not put aside *maʿlūm* for tomorrow but trust in God for his future needs. Donations to the Shaikh are to be consumed during the same day.
 39. sleeve: the inside of the sleeve seems to be sewn in such a way as to form a pocket.
 40. *maqṣura*: in this context the main hall of the mosque is meant, where the imam stands when he directs the congregational prayers.
 41. prayer of custom: see note 31 of this section.
 42. looked askance: see note 49, Bk. I.
 43. maund: see note 64, Bk. I.
 44. *fuṭa*: a kind of cloth, especially used by ascetics and Sufis.
 45. Q.109/6
 46. Ḥallāj (d. 922): al-Ḥoseyn b. Maṣṣur al-Ḥallāj (the carder) was a Persian mystic and theologian born in Fārs in southern Iran. He lived in relative retirement with Sufi teachers (Tostari, ʿAmr-e Makki and Joneyd) until 897 when he went out into the world to preach asceticism and mysticism, his travels taking him to Khorasan, Ahvāz, Fārs, Gujerat and Turkistan. On his return to Baghdad he rapidly gathered disciples around him but was eventually accused of being a charlatan by the orthodox authorities and arrested by the ʿAbbāsid police (913). After eight years in prison he was condemned to death and executed in a most gruesome manner, being flogged, mutilated, exposed on a gibbet and finally decapitated. Official religious opinion was divided concerning Ḥallāj. There have been jurisc-
onsults, theologians and Sufis who repudiated him as a heretic, whereas some Sufis made him their "martyr" *par excellence*. Of his works there remain the *Kitāb al-Tawāṣūn* (ed. Massignon, Paris 1913), 27 *Ravāyāt* of the year 902, 400 fragments in prose and 150 in verse. See Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hallāj, martyr mystique de l'Islam*, Paris 1922, New Edition 1975. For his famous theopathic utterance cited in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*, see note 129, Bk. I.
 47. gallant heroes: ʿayyārān - here the same as *javānmardān* (see note 135, Bk. I). They were renowned for their courage and ability to withstand hardships and torture. The name may also be applied to bandits, who no doubt also liked to think of themselves as living by a code of gallantry.

Notes

48. **Iṣi-ye Nili:** Iṣi is a popular Khorasani form of pronunciation of the common Muslim name 'Āyeṣa. The Nili family of Nishapur was renowned for its scholars and physicians, hence Iṣi's "medical" skill.
49. **ḥabba:** 1/6th of a *dāng*. A *dāng* is 1/6th of a dirhem, i.e. a coin of very small value.
50. **qalandar:** this *robā'i* (if one accepts it as dating from the Shaikh's lifetime) appears to be the earliest mention of the *qalandar* who will have a long history and development on the popular Islamic religious scene. He is a vagrant leading a life of debauchery based on wine, women (more often than not, boys), and song. The origins of the word and the social type remain obscure. From Iṣi's reaction to the quatrain it is clear that reciting verses like these, associated with the disreputable world of the tavern (*karābāḥ*), rather than quoting the Qor'ān or Traditions from the Prophet, is highly shocking to establishment piety. Whether or not his role is already fixed by this time, i.e. the lifetime of Abu Sa'īd, the *qalandar* will eventually come to represent the wild, outer fringe in the spectrum of itinerant mystic figures.
51. **Faṭḥi dirhems:** perhaps a kind of dirhem named after a local prince who struck them.
52. **religious custom: *Sonnat*** - see note 38, Auth. Intro. After urinating, a man must take a few steps to facilitate passing the last of the urine.
53. **private parts: 'owrat** - from the navel to the knees.
54. **'this affair':** see note 15, Auth. Intro.
55. **this subject:** the equivalent of "our subject", what the Shaikh is mystically occupied with.
56. **idol:** a common cliché for a beautiful person.
57. **a name left:** the Shaikh means that he has not given the *konyat*, Abu Sa'īd, to one of his own sons. He therefore bestows it on Qoṣeyri's new born son. This is probably an invention to exploit the fact that Qoṣeyri's second son, Abu Sa'īd Rokn al-Eslām 'Abd al-Vāḥed-e Qoṣeyri (born 1027), bore the common *konyat* Abu Sa'īd.
58. **the thorns:** there are large thorns on parts of a palm tree. The thorn and the date are conventionally employed as an image of the bad and the good, hardship and pleasure.
59. **K^vāja Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri** (d. early 12th century?): Abu'l-Fotuḥ Naṣr b. Ḥoseyn-e Ġazāyeri was a famous Qor'ānic reciter and singer who was also learned in Traditions of the Prophet. He had studied with several eminent scholars of Traditions including Fāṭema, the daughter of Abu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq and wife of Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri.
60. **Shaikh Ḥasan-e Jānāru:** Abu'l-Faḥr b. Aḥmad b. Abi'l-Faḥr, known as Ḥasan-e Jānāru, was an eminent Sufi *pir* from Nishapur who died 1155.
61. **ostād:** a title equivalent to master, and conferred on master craftsmen and artists, as well as on teachers.

62. Emām al-Ḥarameyn Abu'l-Ma'ālī-ye Joveyni (d. 1085): reputed to be the greatest religious scholar of Khorasan, if not of the whole Islamic world of his day and age. During the persecutions of the Aṣḥarites by Toḡrel Beg's vezier al-Kondori, Joveyni, like Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, left Nishapur to live in exile. He spent four years (from 1058) studying and teaching in Mecca and Medina, and thus acquired the title Emām al-Ḥarameyn – Chief of the Two Holy Places. Neẓām al-Molk invited the Aṣḥarites to return and built a special *madrasa* for Joveyni in Nishapur (a Neẓāmiya like the one in Baghdad) where the latter taught until his death. He wrote important works on *feqh* and 'elm-e *kalām* (jurisprudence and scholastic theology) and had renowned students, such as Abu Ḥāmed al-Ġazzālī.
63. The text is corrupt at this point.
64. supporter: see note 13, Auth. Intro.
65. uttering a vow to depart for Mecca: *labbeyk!* This Arabic exclamation, meaning *at Your service*, is normally uttered while actually traveling to Mecca, usually during the final stages of approaching the city. However, here and elsewhere in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* the exclamation serves as an excited declaration of a person's intention to set out on pilgrimage to Mecca.
66. Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku (d. 1037 in Shiraz): successor of Solami (see note 78, Bk.I) and the head of his *kānaqāh* in Nishapur.
67. Wind's Castle: Dez Bād - is the name of a village near Nishapur. The saying is used of someone who is puffed up with pride.
68. the source of wind: there seems to be a double pun here. *Bād* means wind, empty words, "hot air", as well as pride and conceit.
69. destitute of all means: relying on God's providence for one's needs.
70. drew his hand over his face: this is not an idiosyncrasy of the Shaikh but a customary gesture a person makes when he has recited the final prayer and brings an assembly to a close.
71. One pronounces this formula as protection against the snares of Satan.
72. Joveyni: see note 62 of this section.
73. Q.8/63
74. The three titles *ḥabibollāh* (Beloved of God), *kalilollāh* (Friend of God), and *kalimollāh* (Speaker with God), were applied to the prophets Moḥammad, Abraham and Moses, respectively, and represent three spiritual ranks in descending order.
75. This *ḥadis* originally meant that the 'olamā', the learned (in religious knowledge), were like the Hebrew prophets, i.e. the chief guides of their people.
76. 'amid: the civil governor responsible, among other things, for seeing that the taxes are collected.
77. *vizāri* robe: *qabā-ye vizāri* - robe made from a type of cloth originally produced in a town called Vizār near Samarqand. Perhaps this was a cheap cloth and the intention is to show that the future 'amid

Notes

was not yet rich and powerful. His horse's coverlet being of leather, rather than of a more precious material such as brocade, seems to have the same function.

78. Neẓām al-Molk: see note 9 of this section.
79. Transoxania: *Mā varā al-Nahr* - the region north of the Oxus River (*Āmu Daryā*), where Samarqand and Bokhara are located.
80. Boġrā *Kān*: name, or perhaps a title, of a Qarāḳānid ruler. The Qarāḳānid Turks were ruling over territories extending from within Transoxania to Kashgar and Chinese Turkistan. See Meier, p. 324.
81. *So'dā*: the poet (here corresponding to the Shaikh) addresses his beloved who has sent him word through her messenger.
82. texts of jurisprudence: *mottafaq* and *moktalaḥ* - points of agreement and disagreement. See note 41, Bk. I.
83. Q.74/28
84. Bu 'Abdollāh-e Karrām: founder of the sect known as the Karrāmiya. On Abu Bakr-e Eshāq see note 33 of this section.
85. *rāfezi*: a Shiite. On Qāzi Ṣā'ed see note 34 of this section.
86. Q.5/116
87. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk.I.
88. *fuṭa* cloth: see note 44 of this section.
89. Chief of the Merchants: *bayyā'-e Nišābur*. A *bayyā'* is a merchant broker but here the word appears to designate a specific office.
90. barefoot and with bare head: indicative of humility.
91. *harisa* and *zir-vā*: *harisa* is made with wheat groats and meat, whereas *zir-vā* or *zir-bā* is a kind of stew with cumin (*zira*).
92. extravagance: *esrāḥ* - is legally defined and forbidden.
93. *dāng*: sixth of a dirhem. See note 76, Bk. I.
94. Belāl the Abyssinian: Abu 'Abdollāh Belāl, one of the Prophet's Companions, as well as his muezzin.
95. The Possessor of the Celestial Throne: God in His aspect of magnificence and power will look after your material needs.
96. *Karv-e Nišābur*: a village north of Nishapur.
97. two *rak'ats* of prayer: see note 70, Bk. I.
98. the forty men: *abdāls* - holy men of special spiritual status. See note 12, Auth. Intro., on Tent Pegs.
99. an 'Alavi: a descendant of 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb, the Prophet's nephew and son-in-law (d. 660). 'Ali had 14 sons and at least 17 daughters.
100. attachment not by lineage: *nesbat* contrasted with *nasab* - relationship vs. kinship.
101. Bu Jahl and Bu Lahab: relatives of the Prophet who denied him and vehemently opposed his mission.
102. jurist: *dānešmand* - a person learned in *feqh* or Islamic jurisprudence.
103. seven sections: the Qor'ān is divided into seven "sevenths" (sing. *sob*).
104. Q.5/67
105. Q.53/10

106. insight: *ferāsat*. In popular belief the sense of *ferāsat* is extended to mean clairvoyance. See note 22 of this section.
107. the Preserved Tablet: *lowḥ al-maḥfuz*. The tablet on which everything that will happen up until the Last Day, is inscribed. The tablet is guarded or preserved (*maḥfuz*) under God's throne.
108. Qāzi Ṣāʿed: see note 34 of this section.
109. undiluted blood: this form of pollution, according to a particular Tradition from the Prophet, will not affect a man of true faith. The Shaikh has such a Tradition in mind when he speaks this way. For the *ḥadiṣ* in question see Ebn Jowzi, *Talbis Eblis*, Edārat al-ṭebāʾat al-moniriya, Cairo, 1928, p. 362.
110. Turkish *ḡolāms*: young male slaves used as servants, bodyguards, soldiers, etc. Here we have the stereotype of the drunken Turk wielding his whip.
111. censor: *moḥtaseb*. Extravagance is legally defined and proscribed. The *moḥtaseb* is an official charged with watching over trading practices in the bazaars, as well as with the general maintenance of moral standards and security in the public domain. See art. "Hisba", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Leiden.
112. Bu ʿOsmān-e Ḥiri: see note 107, Bk. I. It seems clear that the compiler is confusing Bu ʿOsmān-e Ḥiri, who lived almost a century before Shaikh Bu Saʿid, with Bu ʿOsmān-e Baḥiri. The latter was a contemporary of the Shaikh and did maintain a *kānaqāh* in the neighborhood of Molqābād.
113. Q.39/65
114. drew his hand over his face: See note 70 of this section.
115. *tambur*: a stringed instrument like a lute.
116. This anecdote was retold in verse, first by ʿAṭṭār in his *Moṣibat-nāma* (see Ritter, *Das meer der seele*, p. 80), and later by Jelāl al-Din Mowlānā (*Mathnavi*, trans. by Nicholson, Bk. I, p. 117) with the Caliph ʿOmar I and Medina substituted for Shaikh Abu Saʿid and Nishapur.
117. Bolḡār: refers to a Turkic people who were originally nomadic, and the region (and its chief city) where they settled. The Bolḡār kingdom was formed by the triangle between the Volga and the Kama and the country south of the confluence of these two rivers. Ebn Faḡlān, in his description of an embassy to the Bolḡārs in 921-922 which he accompanied, does not note the existence of any important towns or cities. Eṣṭakri (writing circa 951) is the first to mention the town of Bolḡār as a flourishing center of agriculture and trade. Its favorable geographical situation made it a meeting place for Slavs, Khazars and Muslims.
118. Nahravāla: chief city of Gujrat in India.
119. A few lines are missing from Ṣaffi-Kadkani's text. I have added them from Zabihollāh-e Ṣafā's edition (Tehran, 1953).
120. one dinar and a *ḥabba*: see note 49 of this section.

Notes

121. five and a half *dāngs*: six *dāngs* make one dinar. He will not sell for less than a dinar.
122. a Kurd: Šafī'i-Kadkani points out that this is early evidence for referring to sheep herders in Khorasan as Kurds.
123. It would appear that the Turk's money is ill-gotten and consequently illicit, and that the dog keepers are regarded as "dirty" because of their occupation. If so, the Turk's money, the Turk being presumably a soldier and associated with oppression, corresponds to the dirty bath water, and the dog keepers correspond to the sewer.
124. Mosabbēh-e Naqib: Mosabbēh is the man's name and *naqib* here is the equivalent of *šahna*, a kind of police chief appointed by the military to maintain law and order in a city.
125. *harisa*: see note 91 of this section.
126. clip his nails and trim his mustache: Besides sprucing up the Zoroastrian's appearance, the Shaikh seems to be ordering a ceremony performed which will act as a rite of passage leading to the doctor's conversion to Islam. Giving him the hairs and nail parings to keep accords with Zoroastrian practice.
127. His surname (*nesbat*) is taken from the neighborhood in Nishapur known as Dar-e 'Azra (Bāb-e 'Azra).
128. Nowqān: one of the two parts of the city of Tus, the other being Tābarān. See note 3 of this section.
129. K^Vāja Imam (Abu Aḥmad) Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān: Šafī'i-Kadkani takes this person to be identical with Ostād Abu Aḥmad who is referred to on pp. 203, 204 and 419, 420. Consequently, he concludes that Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān was related to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd by marriage and that Neẓām al-Molk bought the village Rafiqān near Tus and gave it as *vaqf* property to the sons of Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān. It is likely, however, that these are two different persons.
130. Bu Maṣṣur-e Varqāni: nowhere mentioned in sources which record the Saljuq veziers but cited by Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Bākarzi in the *Domyat al-Qaṣr* as a high ranking tax official (*'amid*) who lived in Nishapur. See Šafī'i-Kadkani, p. 680-681.
131. Sultan Toğrel (d. 1063): the founder (along with his brother Čağri) and first sultan of the Saljuq empire. Concerning the relations between Toğrel and Shaikh Abu Sa'īd, see pp. 255-257.
132. interrogation: two angels (see below) interrogate the newly deceased in his grave, as to his good and bad deeds.
133. Two Envoys: the two angels, known elsewhere as Monkar and Nakir.
134. Ebrāhim Ināl: was *šahna* (chief of police) of Nishapur from 1037 to 1046. He did eventually revolt against Toğrel's authority and was put to death in 1059.
135. Iraq: western Iran where Hamadān is located, not present day Iraq.

136. **K^Vāja Imam Abu ‘Ali-ye Fārmadi** (d. 1082): one of the great spiritual figures of Khorasan. As indicated in the anecdote, he was first an intimate disciple of Qoṣeyri and then attached himself to Korrakāni, whose daughter he married. He eventually became famous for his eloquent preaching and acquired the title *“lesān al-vaqt”* – tongue of the age.
137. the Sarrājān School: *madrasa-ye sarrājān* - perhaps this school took its name from being located by the Bazaar of the Saddle Makers (*sarrājān*).
138. The implication of this remark seems to be that Bu ‘Ali’s friendly gesture in the bath made Qoṣeyri realize the extent of Bu ‘Ali’s spiritual development.
139. Korrakāni: see note 13 of this section.
140. *rak’ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
141. Performing two *rak’ats* of prayer by way of greeting a mosque upon arrival in a new place is a generally commended Islamic practice which Sufis were especially scrupulous in observing.
142. **K^Vāja Imam Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni** (d. 1047): the father of Emām al-Ḥarameyn (see note 62 of this section). He lived and taught in Nishapur from 1017 to 1047.
143. controversies: *kalāfi* - a branch of *‘elm-e feqh* (jurisprudence) which deals with the points of difference between the Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence.
144. inner purity: *pāki-ye kerqa* - literally, the purity of his patched frock. It is a metaphor for the Shaikh’s inner purity.
145. “This affair”: see note 15, Auth. Intro.
146. **Ostād Esmā’il-e Šābuni** (d. 1057): famous religious scholar and head preacher (*kaṭib*) of the Congregational Mosque of Nishapur.
147. *rak’ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
148. *takbir peyvastan*: to utter “*Allāh akbar*” by way of initiating the prayers.
149. *kiyā*: apparently a kind of headman or censor but originally *kiyā* was the local title of the king of Nishapur.
150. *zir-vā*: see note 91 of this section.
151. Ganj-e Rud: a village located within the *rabāz* of Nishapur, i.e. within the suburbs which grew up outside the city walls.
152. declined the invitation: *elhāḥ kardan* - said of a camel when it stubbornly refuses to go forward. See Dehkodā, *Loḡat-nāma*.
153. *dar-e rebāti*: a kind of prayer-rug, perhaps used at the entrance of a *rebāt*. See note on p. 535 of Šaffi-Kadkani’s edition of the text.
154. Sultan Suri: Suri b. Mo’tazz was not the sultan. He was Sultan Mas’ud’s *šāheb-divān*, i.e. the financial administrator for Khorasan.
155. what’s best for you: that is, giving money to Shaikh Abu Sa’id.
156. pious bigot: *qorrā* (pl. of *qāre* but with a singular sense) - reader or expert reciter of the Qor’ān. For this meaning see note 12, Bk. I.

Notes

Here, as in several other passages, the word has the pejorative meaning of a pious bigot.

157. Bu 'Abdollāh-e Karrām: see note 33 of this section.
158. *Kvāja Hoseyn-e Ġenādusti*: his *nesbat* is taken from the village Ġenādust near Saraks.
159. *zir-vā*: see note 91 of this section.
160. concentrated longing: *be-hemmat* - the point is that though the baby is too young to speak, it's spiritual concentration can effectively appeal to God. The *hemmat* of Sufi shaikhs is one of their important spiritual powers. See note 153, Bk. I.
161. Solami: see note 78, Bk. I.
162. The Shaikh appears to be praising Bu Moslem. The fact that nothing can be found for him to eat is a sign of the extent of his poverty. Poverty in the spiritual sense, i.e. recognition of one's neediness before God, is to be independent of normal needs.
163. These verses are attributed to Abu Sa'īd by Hojviri (d. after 1089) in the *Kašf al-Mahjub*. However, Qoṣeyri, in his Qor'ānic commentary, *Laṭā'ef al-Eṣṣarāt*, cites them without naming their author. It is unlikely that Qoṣeyri would be quoting from Abu Sa'īd and suggests that the verses are older.
164. Q.7/198
165. Ṣābuni: see note 146 of this section.
166. Ostād Imam Bu 'Alī Zāher: see note 43, Bk. I.
167. Q.42/52
168. *ṭeylasān*: a kind of shawl which can be worn over the head and is commonly associated with religious scholars and ascetics.
169. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni: see note 142 of this section.
170. no sign: in some cases Jews and other non-Muslims were obliged to wear a yellow cloth on their shoulder. This sign was called an '*asali* or a *ḡiyār*. The custom was instituted by the caliph Motavvakeh in the mid-ninth century.
171. woollen cloak from Rum: a *ṣuf* from Asia Minor (Rum). But the word *ṣuf* may have come to designate a particular kind of garment which could then be made from a more valuable material. Rum here suggests luxury.
172. *God is sublime!*: *sobḥānollāh* - for the most part, an exclamation of surprise throughout the *Asrār al-Towḥid*.
173. green woollen jacket: *labāča-ye sabz*: for a discussion of this garment's exact shape see the note on p. 542 of Šafī'i-Kadkani's edition of the text.
174. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
175. *labbeyk!*: at Your service. An exclamation declaring before God one's intention of setting out on the pilgrimage to Mecca. See note 65 of this section.

176. The pilgrim assumes a consecrated state (*ehṛām*) and while in this state, must observe certain prescriptions such as abstaining from shaving, combing hair and sexual relations.
177. Hejāz: the region of Arabia where Mecca and Medina are located.
178. Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni (d. 1033): though he had no formal education, Karaqāni became one of the most famous mystics in Iran. Many anecdotes exist about him. See especially the long section on his life in the Supplement to 'Aṭṭār's *Tazkerat al-Owliyā'*. The present account which is disproportionately long compared with other anecdotes about the Shaikh, gives the impression of being sewn together from separate bits of information. In places, it includes circumstantial details of no importance for the anecdotal narrative, suggesting that it has not been reworked and smoothed out by several different hands.
179. Joseph: the same Joseph of Old Testament fame who resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife. In the Islamic tradition Joseph is a paragon of male beauty and the favorite son of his father Jacob.
180. the foreign Sufis: Karaqāni's followers, not the Sufis who are accompanying Shaikh Abu Sa'id.
181. the mother of K^Vāja Moẓaffar: this is a way of referring to a particular wife of the Shaikh. K^Vāja Moẓaffar is one of the Shaikh's several sons.
182. *faqira*: the feminine form of *faqir*, poor, having renounced the world. *Faqir* is the Arabic equivalent of *darvish*.
183. *qāẓi*: a judge must study the religious sciences in order to become qualified to hold office. A few lines below the *qāẓi* is referred to as a jurist (*dānešmand*). People with formal religious learning are frequently portrayed as being, whether in act or in spirit, opposed to the Sufis.
184. *nazar-i be-heybat*: Sufi shaikhs are generally accredited with being able to direct a "devastating" glance at anyone they disapprove of.
185. the pilgrimage: what follows is a series of metaphors based on the rites performed by pilgrims at Mecca. See note 65, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, for *labbeyk*. Pilgrims visit the plain of 'Arafāt, cast pebbles at Menā, perform a sacrifice (here Karaqāni's son has been sacrificed), and perform prayers known as prayers of the feast (*namāz-e 'id*).
186. 'Omra: the minor pilgrimage to Mecca which does not have to be undertaken at a special time of year and includes fewer ceremonies.
187. The Shaikh asks himself whether he really ought to be there, i.e. whether he has the right to stand there.
188. Ṣalva is unknown, whereas Arey is a village near Karaqān.
189. the wings of the lock: *parra-ye qofl* - the part in the lock which causes it to be open or closed.
190. full-moon: there is a pun here. The beloved is conventionally described as having a face like the full-moon, and the moonlit night is

Notes

- the occasion of the beloved's clandestine visit to the lover. "My Prince" refers to the beloved.
191. in that direction: to Mecca.
 192. *Hejāz*: see note 177 of this section.
 193. 'this higher meaning': *in ma'ni* - like *in ḥadis* (see note 15, Auth. Intro.) an expression for higher mystical meaning – a kind of pronoun substitute.
 194. throne... hat and... on display (unveiled in public): these are the traditional adornments of the bride at her wedding. They suggest worldly success and being in the limelight. The greater beauties who are present but do not receive these honors are analogous to the spiritual elite who do not always attain recognition and receive the public acclaim they deserve.
 195. drinking bowl: a magic cup originally belonging to the ancient mythical king Jamšid (*jām-e jam*) in which the whole world was reflected.
 196. joy and sorrow: this contrast of temperaments was traditionally associated with Shaikh Abu Sa'īd and Abu'l-Ḥasan-e *Karaqāni* and seems already to have become a form of thematic characterization. For expansion and contraction (*qabḏ and basṭ*) see note 72, Bk. I, and for more on sorrow and joy, see the anecdote on p. 123-124.
 197. prayer-rugs: *zāviya* - normally the word means corner, cell of seclusion, etc., but here and elsewhere in the *Asrār al-Towḥid* the sense appears to be a darvish's affairs or his prayer-rug. See p. 359 (and note 139, Bk. II, Chpt. 2) where, when a darvish is ejected from the *kānaqāh*, his *zāviya* is put out on the street.
 198. *Faṭḥi* dirhems: see note 51 of this section.
 199. *Kalaf*: besides being the name of a village, the word no doubt suggested an unpropitious meaning. What that meaning was is not clear. Perhaps the word suggested *takallof* which means undue effort or affectation and is traditionally rejected by Sufis as a behavioral trait.
 200. *Darband*: suggests "being in bonds".
 201. *Kodā-Šād*: happy in God.
 202. devour the liver: the liver is the seat of the emotions and to devour one's liver is an idiom for undergoing emotional suffering. The image is particularly associated with the lover's grief at being apart from the beloved.
 203. *faraji*: a garment open at the front and worn over the shoulders.
 204. *mozdavaja*: a particular kind of hat padded out with cotton.
 205. apple of my eye: literally my livers.
 206. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni and Esmā'il-e Šābuni: see notes 142 and 146 of this section, respectively.
 207. clods: used for cleaning oneself after defecation.

208. the Gnostic of Nowqān: *ʿĀref-e Nowqāni* - a famous Sufi and scholar of Traditions from the Prophet. He lived for a time in Meyhana, as well as in Nowqān (see note 128 of this section).
209. *qāmat*... and prayers of obligation: see note 31 of this section.
210. without prayers... clean for prayers: *bi-namāzi/namāzi* - there is a word play in the Persian.
211. in accordance with this Tradition: i.e. as an heir of the prophets.
212. what I am going to say: the Shaikh never says what he has in mind. It is Yahyā when he returns from Mecca later in the anecdote, who says what the Shaikh is here referring to.
213. Transoxania: see note 79 of this section.
214. consume all by oneself: *rasti kardan* - an expression from the *kāna-qāh* milieu meaning to eat by yourself some gift of food, i.e. not to share it with the others in the group.
215. maund: see note 64, Bk. I.
216. Bu ʿAmr-e Boṣṣevāni (1009-1080): despite the problems of chronology, this is the Sufi shaikh, Abu ʿAmr Aḥmad b. Moḥammad b. ʿOsmān, who came from the village Boṣṣevān (vocalization uncertain) near Nasā.
217. *Sonnat*: see note 38, Auth. Intro.
218. *farsang*: see note 69, Bk. I.
219. the fourth heavenly sphere: that is to say, his fame as a spiritual figure has reached such great heights.
220. devoid of all means: *tajrid* - without pack animals or supplies, and by oneself.
221. absolute trust in God: *tavakkol* - without supplies and trusting that God will provide for your needs along the way.
222. in a state of wakefulness: *bi-dāri* - spiritually alert, with one's mind on God. The three preceding terms connote spiritual states, as well as designating physical conditions. See Benedikt Reinert, *Die Lehre von tawwakul in der klassischen Sufik*, Berlin 1968, p. 198 b) 3., where he maintains there is no difference between traveling *bar tajrid* or *bar tawvakol* but that one of the expressions was originally a gloss before being incorporated in the text.
223. Nur-e Bokārā: a town near Bokhara. Nearby was a mountain which contained the tombs of famous *valis* and men of piety. After the fall of the Sāmānid dynasty, the sons of Saljuq -- Musā, Mikā'il and Arslān Esrā'il, and Mikā'il's two sons, Toḡrel Beg and Čaḡri Beg, occupied winter pastures in Nur-e Bokārā and summer pastures in Soghdia.
224. Tažan-e Bāvard: the name of a river and a district within the province of Bāvard (Abivard).
225. Suri: see note 154 of this section.
226. Čaḡri and Toḡrel: see note 131 of this section.
227. sepulchral shrine: see note 74, Bk. I.
228. Iraq: see note 135 of this section.

Notes

229. forty balances: this is meant to be an indication of the scale of trading and prosperity.
230. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
231. Dandānqān-by-Marv: according to the Ġaznavid historian, Gardizi, Sultan Mas'ud marched from Bāvard to Saraks (via Meyhana) and laid siege to Saraks because the city had refused to pay him taxes. When Saraks fell, the sultan ordered some of the defenders to be executed and others to have their hands chopped off. In the *Asrār al-Towhīd*, the historical siege and punishment have been transferred to Meyhana. This is an interesting example of how the process at work producing anecdotes in the *Asrār al-Towhīd* is capable of freely adapting any available source materials. On his return march to Marv, Mas'ud was defeated by the Saljuq Turks near Dandānqān (1040) and lost his hold over all of Khorasan and the territories north of the Hindu Kush. Nishapur, which had been temporarily taken by the Saljuqs in 1038, was occupied again in 1040.
232. Suri: see note 154 of this section.
233. Q.33/38
234. discipleship: *erādat* - the attachment of the *morid* (spiritual aspirant, disciple) to his spiritual guide.
235. Torkomān devastations: the violence and unrest caused by the rise to power of the Saljuq Turks in Khorasan.
236. Q.33/23
237. peasant: *ra'iyat* - to follow the mystic path is to risk one's life like a warrior. Warriors, according to the heroic tradition alluded to in the verses, do not come from among the peasant class.
238. Transoxania: see note 79 of this section.
239. admirer: same as supporter. See note 13, Auth. Intro.
240. Q.3/133
241. Q.53/17
242. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
243. Ġaznin: see note 36 of this section.
244. maunds: see note 64, Bk. I.
245. Dar-e 'Azra: is the name of a particular gate and neighborhood of Nishapur - here used like a *nesbat*.
246. the whole day and night: this is a miraculous speed for traveling such a distance.
247. sepulchral shrine: see note 74, Bk. I.
248. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
249. sheer lack of power to choose: *hama bi-ektiyāri* - having no will, choice or power, which is here contrasted with lordliness -- *kodā-vandi*.
250. Q.23/51
251. large mill: *kar-ās* - not ass-mill. *Kar* means "large". The mill could be worked by donkeys or camels: *kar-e kar-ās*, *šotor-e kar-ās* (Meier).

252. 'Alavi: a descendant of the Prophet (see note 99 of this section). A few lines below he is addressed with the title *sayyed* for the same reason.
253. from Ṭus to Nowqān: see note 3 of this section.
254. bigots: see note 156 of this section.
255. glance down on/look up at: *foru negarestan/bar negarestan* -- the contrast expressed by the two verbs is one of inferior and superior spiritual rank.
256. servant: *kādem* - the caretaker of the *kānaqāh* who looks after practical matters. Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb has the same function with regard to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd and his disciples, both in Nishapur and Meyhana.
257. *rebāf*: see note 71, Bk. I.
258. sepulchral shrine: see note 74, Bk. I.
259. the head of the village: reading *su-ye sar-e dih*. Šafi'i-Kadkani suggests the reading *su-ye sardāba* (= *sardāva*), i.e. in the direction of Sardāva, a place on the road to Ṭus.
260. drew his hand over his face: see note 70 of this section.
261. *takbir*: see note 148 of this section.
262. maunds: see note 64, Bk. I.
263. Torkomān raids: see note 235 of this section.
264. Ġaznīn: see note 36 of this section.
265. the Torkomān's club: *čomāq* - the distinctive war club of the rough, uncivilized Torkomāns which is here employed by Shaikh Abu Sa'īd to chastize Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb's *nafs* (carnal soul).
266. The full name is illegible.
267. the oath: the man may have sworn an oath to divorce his wife if something did not take place or a certain action was not fulfilled. In the event, such an oath might lead to regret.
268. tunic and a hat: *qabā* - a long sleeved garment open at the front. These items of clothing here indicate that the wearer is dressed in lordly fashion and identifies with the class of office holders.
269. not genuine: *'āriyati* - "borrowed".
270. Neẓām al-Molk: see note 9 of this section.
271. *vaqf*: an endowment set apart for religious or charitable purposes. Consequently no taxes are levied on it. Concerning Ostād Bu Aḥmad, see note 129 of this section.
272. Neẓām al-Molk: see note 9 of this section.
273. 'Alavi: see note 99 of this section.
274. month of Šavvāl: the appearance of the new moon marks the end of Ramaẓān and the fasting.
275. dressed in blue: the color of clothing traditionally associated with Sufis.
276. Ḥasan: Neẓām al-Molk's name. He is here speaking of himself in the 3rd person.
277. heretics: the Esmā'ilis whose actual "hit men" came to be known as the Assassins.

Notes

278. Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi: see note 136 of this section.
279. Bu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni: see note 13 of this section.
280. vestibule: where shoes are left when one enters a house or mosque.
281. Amir Ma'sud-e Banjar: for a discussion of the possible identity of this *amir* (military commander), see note on p. 721 of Šafī'i-Kadkani's edition of the text.
282. Ġuri hounds: from the mountainous region of Ġur in central Afghanistan.
283. The same story, with only slight variations, is told about Abu Ḥaṣṣ-e Ḥaddād in Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Solami's *Resālat al-Malāmatiya* (which was written earlier than the *Asrār al-Towḥid*), as well as in 'Aṭṭār's *Tazkerat al-Owliyā'*.
284. Bu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi: see note 136 of this section.
285. fire: Abraham contested the tyrant Nimrod's religion. To punish him, Nimrod cast Abraham into a fire but, due to divine intervention, the flames were cool and did not harm Abraham.
286. maund: see note 64, Bk. I.
287. roof: *bām* - see note 8 of this section.
288. sepulchral shrine: see note 74, Bk. I.
289. Oh Moon: the woman's name, Māhak, means little moon.
290. *Ṣaḥiḥ* ("sound" - the term applied to a *ḥadīṣ* whose chain of transmission is flawless): title of the famous collection of Traditions from the Prophet, compiled by Moḥammad b. Esmā'il al-Bokāri (d. 870) who traveled widely (from Khorasan to Egypt) in quest of Traditions. The collection contains 7000 *ḥadīṣ* – or 2762, if repetitions are not counted – arranged according to subject matter. By the end of the 10th century, the *Ṣaḥiḥ* of Bokāri, along with the collection of the same name by Moslem, was considered the second most important book after the *Qor'ān* in the Muslim world.
291. had heard: he had heard them from learned specialists, as a method of transmission and study.
292. *Kotan*: a city in Chinese Turkistan, 270 miles S.E. of Kashgar (in the present day Sinkiang Uigur Autonomous Region, China). According to Gardizi (writing after 1040), the inhabitants of *Kotan* were Buddhists and under the domination of the Toguzguz Turks. The *Kotanese* spoke an Iranian language, probably a dialect of the Saka language.
293. *Ṭabarestān*: see note 26 of this section.
294. the River: the Āmu Daryā (Oxus). He is crossing the river on his way south into Khorasan.
295. religious scholar: *dānešmand* - the remark Nowqāni has made to the Shaikh is seen as typical of the know-it-all mentality of the religious scholars.
296. Q.93
297. *dorrā'a*: upper garment worn over other clothes and made of cheap material like wool or cotton – primarily worn by ascetics and poor people (Šafī'i-Kadkani).

298. the hottest hour of the day: the time when everyone would be taking a siesta. Ḥamza's clumsy movements are consequently all the more disturbing.
299. porter's robes: metaphor for the distinctive dress of the Sufis.
300. an official: 'arif - foreman, overseer of a trade or craft. See glossary in A. K. S. Lambton's *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia*, London 1988. But Šaff'i-Kadkani, in a note on p. 561 of his edition of the text, defines the 'arif as an official who holds a rank below that of the headman (*ra'īs*). From a religious point of view, the duties and activities of certain officials were looked upon as impure and their money was considered to be ill-gotten.
301. Q.3/37
302. chains of transmission: *asānīd* - see note 11, Intro.
303. utterances: *anfās* - literally breaths of the Shaikh. The sense, as elsewhere, seems to be his words and precepts.

NOTES TO BOOK TWO, CHAPTER TWO.

1. cleansing himself: *estebrā'* - ritually prescribed procedure undertaken after urinating. See Moḥammad-e Ġazzālī, *Kimiyā-ye Sa'ādat*, chpt. on *estenjā'*.
2. Q.22/52
3. the carpenter who works them out: irony. God is behind everything that happens.
4. These verses (and those on p. 529) appear to have been composed by the 10th century poetess Rāb'ā, the daughter of Ka'b. Jāmi, in the *Nafahāt al-Ons*, presents Abu Sa'īd as recounting an anecdote about Rāb'ā's love where these verses occur.
5. aromatic delicacies: *dast-anbuya* - anything odiferous carried in the hand, especially fruit. The word may also mean a *pot-pourri*, petals kept in a jar for the sake of their lingering scent. The thought might then be that the two children of the Shaikh will await him in Paradise retaining their "scent" until he joins them.
6. *K*^Vāja Bu 'Ali-ye Sinā or Avicenna (d. 1037): one of the greatest medical doctors and philosophers of the Muslim Middle Ages. In this anecdote he is simply juxtaposed with the Shaikh as the greatest representative of rational knowledge, and he concedes that the Shaikh and the Friends possess higher powers. Meier (p. 27-28) reviews the pertinent historical evidence and concludes that it is highly improbable that any such meeting would have taken place. On Avicenna in general, see Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, Brill 1988.
7. correspondence: for the authenticity of such correspondence and the relevant bibliography, see Meier, p. 28.

Notes

8. For a variation on the same theme, see the question Averroes put to Ebn 'Arabi as to whether divine illumination and rational speculation are in agreement (*al-Fotuhāt al-Makkiya*, chpt. 15; R. W. J. Austin: *Sufis of Andalusia*, London 1971, p. 23-24).
9. Ebrāhim-e Adham (d. 776-7): an early legendary Sufi who was from a princely family in Balk. He lived and died in Syria. See Annemarie Schimmel: *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, University of North Carolina Press, U.S.A., 1975.
10. *Eṣārāt: al-Isārāt w'al-tanbihāt*, ed. by S. Dunya, Cairo 1960-1968. And the work has been translated into French by A.-M. Goichon: *Ibn Sīnā, Livre des Directives et Remarques*, Beirut/Paris 1951.
11. lordliness: *k^vājagi* - the Iranian title *k^vāja* was borne by ministers at a prince's court and other political dignitaries. In common usage, however, the title was loosely applied by way of showing respect. Here, of course, the reference is to Ḥasan's lordly bearing.
12. organs: *jegarband* - liver, heart and lungs.
13. Q.6/91
14. Q.73/9
15. Loqmān: see pp. 87-89 where Loqmān first appears and is characterized.
16. *God is sublime!*: see note 172, Bk. II, Chpt 1.
17. *qāmat*: see note 31, Bk. II, Chapt. 1.
18. too late: when the prescribed time for ritual prayer has elapsed.
19. drew his hand over his face: see note 70, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
20. created beings: *kalq* - creation, created beings and, more specifically, mankind, people. There is an unbridgeable gap between *kalq* and God.
21. Abu'l-Dardā' (d. 652): the youngest of the Companions of the Prophet and one of the compilers of the Qor'ān. Once when the Prophet was speaking and Abu'l-Dardā' expressed surprise at something he said, the Prophet replied in this manner. The phrase became a standard form of emphatic assertion.
22. Abu Bakr-e Vāseti (d. after 920): a famous mystic who spent time with Joneyd and Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Nuri. He was born in Farḡāna, grew up in Baghdad, but then spent most of his life in Abivard and Marv.
23. Sahl b. 'Abdollāh al-Tostari (d. 896): a famous mystic of Basra. The theological-mystical school, the Sālemiyya, derived from Tostari (named after Ebn Sālem, his chief disciple). Likewise, the earliest surviving Sufi Qor'ānic commentary is attributed to Tostari.
24. Shaikh Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb: see note 98, Bk. I.
25. *in the robe*: see note 131, Bk. I.
26. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, Qoṣeyri, Esmā'il-e Ṣābuni: see notes 142, 19 and 146, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, respectively.
27. Bu'l-Faḥr-e Šeyk: the most important of the Shaikh's grandchildren.
28. *Gozz*: see note 16, Auth. Intro.

29. **Kābarān**: the district of which Meyhana is the chief town. The district lies between Saraks and Abivard (Bāvard), and includes Šowkān and Azjāh, towns also mentioned in the *Asrār al-Towḥid*.
30. Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin: see note 13, Bk. I.
31. gaze of awesome authority: see note 184, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
32. 'Oqba b. 'Āmer (d. circa 680): one of the Companions of the Prophet and a compiler of the Qor'ān.
33. Shaikh Bu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan: Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's *pir-e šoḥbat*, i.e. the spiritual guide who initiated him (see p. 84). For their relationship, see pp. 88-89 where Loqmān introduces the Shaikh to Bu'l-Faẓl.
34. True Sufis: *išān* - "they", apparently referring to spiritual aspirants who have succeeded in divesting themselves of their sense of "I-ness". Likewise, it may mean Bu'l-Faẓl himself, just as Shaikh Abu Sa'īd said "they" instead of "I" (see p. 75) when referring to himself.
35. *give me my book in my right hand*: the book of one's deeds. See Q.17/71 (with reference to the afterlife): "Those who are given their books in their right hands will read their recorded deeds, and shall not in the least be wronged."
36. *qonut*: a prayer of supplication pronounced while standing.
37. our companions: scholars (*foqahā*) of the Šāfi'ī school of jurisprudence.
38. *tašahhod*: testifying to the Oneness of God and the apostleship of Moḥammad while seated at the end of the second *rak'at* of prayer (or fourth, if it is a four *rak'at* prayer).
39. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
40. refuse: *kāša* - in Šafā's edition of the text, the first mention of refuse a few lines above is in the form of *kāšāk*, and the boy's reply is *kāša*, as if it were the Nishapuri variant of the word.
41. Chief of the world: the Prophet Moḥammad.
42. *farsak*: variant of *farsang* (see note 69, Bk. I).
43. 'Alavi: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
44. Shaikh Bu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku: see note 66, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
45. Solami: see note 78, Bk. I.
46. Šervān: a region which is today located in Soviet Azarbayjan. The village referred to in this gloss, however, has no connection with Abu 'Abdollāh-e Bāku's name.
47. the little... the big: *kordān o bozorgān* - the uneducated and the spiritually advanced.
48. *samā*: see note 8, Bk. I.
49. sat cross-legged: to sit on both knees upon one's heels is the respectful posture.
50. Jamšid, Nimrod, Pharaoh and Hāmān: powerful and despotic rulers of legendary fame. Jamšid was an early mythical Iranian king. Nimrod persecuted Abraham and attempted to scale the heavens to kill God. Pharaoh and his wealthy vezier Hāmān complete the list of deluded tyrants.

Notes

51. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
52. dominion: *molk* - besides referring to God's dominion on judgement day, *molk* can also mean ownership or the right of possession, which makes the Qor'ānic quotation pertinent to the mill.
53. Q.40/16
54. Q.16/92 The image is used of someone who breaks an oath.
55. the belts of their religion: *zonnār* - a special belt which Christians (as well as other non-Muslims) were obliged to wear as a distinctive item of clothing. Removing it implied renouncing their Christian faith to become Muslims.
56. as was their custom: when a pupil reached a particular chapter (surah) in studying the Qor'ān, it was customary for his fellow pupils to carry his slate to his house as an indication of his having attained a further stage in his studies.
57. Q.98: *"The unbelievers among the people of the Book and the pagans did not desist from unbelief until..."*
58. Q.94: *"Have We not expanded for you your breast and relieved you of the burden...?"* The Shaikh prefers this surah as being auspicious (*tafa'ol*) because of its joyful aspect.
59. The woman's remark is ambiguous to me. Perhaps she says "alas!" not with reference to the damaged roof, but because she is disappointed at not being reprimanded or punished more severely by the Shaikh, somewhat along Malāmati lines of thinking -- as if his censure would bring her spiritual benefit. On Malāmatis see note 18, Bk. II, Chpt. 3.
60. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni: see note 142, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
61. *faraji*: a particular kind of cloak, open at the front.
62. the four Abu Bakrs: Šafi'i-Kadkani remarks in his notes that this grouping is not referred to elsewhere and there are simply too many Abu Bakrs to be able to identify which ones are intended here.
63. Q.6/59
64. Q.10/53
65. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni: see note 142, Bk. II, Chpt. 1. Emām al-Ḥarameyn: see note 62, Bk. II, Chpt. 1. Qāzi Šā'ed: see note 34, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
66. 'Ali-ye Šandali: fanatic partisan of the Ḥanafī *mazhab* and Mo'tazeli theology. In Nishapur he was the driving force behind the persecution of the Šāfē'is, the Karrāmis and, in particular, the adherents of Aṣ'ari theology. Throughout the persecution, he enjoyed the protection of the powerful Saljuq vezier 'Amid al-Molk al-Kondori. Šandali was given the post of *kaṭīb* in the Old Congregational Mosque which he retained for nine years. It is not surprising that he is portrayed as an enemy of Sufis (see anecdote on pp. 410-411), since the latter were all Šāfē'is and, where theology was concerned, sympathetic to the Aṣ'arites. See Bulliet, *Patricians*, pp. 236-37.

67. Ostād Esmā'il-e Šābuni: see note 146, Bk. II, Chpt. 1. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
68. Darzāv-e Now Bahār: apparently that part of the district of Darzāv which was named after the village Now Bahār.
69. Torkomān raids: see note 235, Bk. II, Chpt.1.
70. cut their hair: ritual behavior which, like changing one's form of clothing, indicates a change of status in life.
71. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
72. that you do not behold here?: following Šafā's text.
73. has been revealed to me: *namudan* - to show, cause to appear. See p. 424 where the verb *namudan* seems to be used with a similar "spiritual" sense: "Something was revealed to him..." and "God revealed *Keẓr* to him..."
74. 'this matter': *in ḥadis* - see note 15, Auth. Intro. 'This matter' refers in a literal sense to gladness of heart which the old woman has requested. But the expression is almost exclusively employed throughout the *Asrār al-Towḥid* to indicate higher mystic insight. By means of the repetition, the Shaikh seems to be equating the two.
75. Sayyed-e Ajall: a title held by the prestigious head of the 'Alavis in Nishapur, i.e. the descendants of the Prophet Moḥammad through 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb. In this case, the Sayyed-e Ajall referred to is Abu Moḥammad Ḥasan b. Zeyd (d. 1077). See Bulliet, *Patricians*, p. 235 (7).
76. Bu'l-'Abbās-e Šaqqāni: a famous Sufi learned in theology and religious jurisprudence. Hojviri met him and praises him highly in the *Kašf al-Maḥjub*.
77. leather trousers: the distinctive dress is perhaps meant to identify the youths as members of a neighborhood youth group (connected with *fotovva*?) who indulge in such reprehensible pastimes as gambling. The anecdote acquires a characteristically antinomian twist because the Shaikh takes his example from their misbehavior.
78. staking my all: *pāk-bāktan* to stake everything one has in a game of chance. But the words may also mean to lose everything, and no doubt the Shaikh is consciously exploiting this sense to express a paradox.
79. 'labbeyk': see note 175, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
80. sepulchral shrine: see note 74, Bk. I.
81. *God is sublime!:* see note 172, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
82. enforcing what is lawful: *amr-e ma'ruf* - directing others to do what is laid down by religious law.
83. the light of this candle: there is a lit candle at his bedside. The light (*rowšnāʾī*) also has the metaphorical sense of spiritual illumination.
84. Shaikh Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni: see note 142, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
85. the customary practices: euphemism for removing pubic hairs.

Notes

86. The opposites may include: warm and cold, dirt and cleanliness, water and solid bodies, and perhaps even Joveyni and Shaikh Abu Sa'īd.
87. Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni: see note 178, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
88. Kōtan: following the reading in Ṣafā's text. See note 292, Bk. II, Chpt. 1. The idea is that the beloved close to home keeps the Shaikh from thinking of an exotic, far off beloved. He doesn't want to be distracted from his higher state by considering their questions.
89. drew his hand over his face: see note 70, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
90. fit to perform the prayers: blood pollutes and renders clothing ritually impure.
91. Kānaqāh-e Ṣonduqi: originally the *kānaqāh* of Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami (see note 78, Bk. I) but it came to be named after Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Ali b. Naṣr-e Ṣonduqi who was the custodian (*kādem*) at a later date.
92. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
93. Sayyed-e Ajall Ḥasan: see note 75 of this section.
94. from the Prophet: Sayyed-e Ajall is a descendant of the Prophet Moḥammad.
95. spiritual contraction: see note 72, Bk. I.
96. Pir Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan: see note 48, Bk. I.
97. Loqmān-e Saraḡsi: see note 47, Bk. I.
98. Rebāṭ: see note 71, Bk. I.
99. paid taxes and received a receipt: during his lifetime he has acquitted himself of his duties before God.
100. professing God's Oneness: for the different meanings of *tawḥīd*, see note 29, Auth. Intro.
101. *God is sublime!*: see note 172, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
102. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
103. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
104. Qoṣeyri, Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni, Esmā'il-e Ṣābuni: see notes 19, 142 and 146, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, respectively.
105. Moṣṭafā: see note 7, Auth. Intro.
106. Imām al-Ḥaramayn: see note 62, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
107. Controversies: *kalāfi* - a branch of studies in *feqh* (religious jurisprudence) which reviews the points of disagreement between the four Sunni schools (*mazāheb*).
108. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
109. "people of life": another expression for the Sufis.
110. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
111. We're no earth to this man's shovell: *mā-rā be-bil-e in mard gel nist* -- we can offer no resistance or opposition to this man's will, i.e. we're no match for this man!
112. on both knees: the respectful way of sitting before someone.
113. Q. 20/5 Posing this question indicates that the man belongs to the Karrāmiya or has Karrāmi sympathies. This is a Qor'ānic verse which

- was associated with long standing theological disputes concerning God's attributes. The issue had to do with how God could have a face, hands, sit upon a throne, etc. (as mentioned in the Qor'ān). The "old ladies in Meyhana" and anyone else of sound faith maintain that God has existed from all eternity, whereas sitting on a throne, if taken in a literal sense, is tainted with anthropomorphism. See note 33, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, on Abu Bakr-e Eshāq-e Karrāmi.
114. *kāy*: following Šafī'i-Kadkani's interpretation of this passage. See note on p. 739 of his edition of the text.
 115. Šeyk al-Eslām 'Abdollāh-e Anṣārī (d. 1089): famous mystic of Herat and author of numerous works on Sufism in Persian and Arabic. He was an adherent of the Ḥanbalite school of religious jurisprudence. The office of Šeyk al-Eslām seems to have consisted of examining and accrediting religious scholars. See Bulliet, *Patricians*, pp. 52-53.
 116. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
 117. souvenirs: *rāh-āvard* - a gift a traveller gives when he returns home from a journey.
 118. place of ill repute: *karābāt* - tavern, place where one might drink and indulge in other sinful practices.
 119. "Cut off my hair": see note 70 of this section.
 120. This is a saying equivalent to "easy come, easy go".
 121. Seyf al-Dowla Ebrāhim: the same person as Ebrāhim Ināl, though he was never governor of Nishapur. See note 134, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 122. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 123. Ebrāhim Ināl: see note 134, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 124. Ka'ba and *qebila*: see note 33 and 34, Auth. Intro.
 125. Moṣṭafā: see note 7, Auth. Intro.
 126. 'Ali, Joneyd and Šebli: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, and notes 55 and 80, Bk. I, respectively.
 127. Transoxania: see note 79, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 128. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 129. See pp. 154-155 for the anecdote describing Qoṣeyri's first visit to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's assembly in the *kānaqāh* on 'Adani Kuyān Street.
 130. Darzakiya: an unidentified place name.
 131. *mofti*: see note 16, Bk. I.
 132. the sultan's agents: *'ommāl* (pl. of *'āmel*) - officers in charge of tax collection.
 133. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
 134. The Shaikh's seemingly reprehensible behavior protects him from people's jealousy. If he actually manifested his true sanctity, people would be jealous and cast a spell on him (the evil eye).
 135. See pp. 268-269 for the anecdote describing the Shaikh's visit to Pir Bu 'Ali's *kānaqāh* in Marv.
 136. *God is sublime!*: see note 172, Bk. II, Chpt. 1
 137. Where am I and where is this man!: an idiomatic exclamation, expressing the great difference one perceives between two things.

Notes

138. *rebāf*: see note 71, Bk. I.
139. belongings: *zāviya-hā* - whatever belongings a darvish has, perhaps wrapped up in his prayer-rug. See note 197, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
140. "in need": *niyāz* - longing, a sense of need (for God) is a precondition for advancing on the mystic path.
141. belong to him: *be-ḥokm-e kas-i budan* - to belong to someone as property, or to be someone's wife.
142. Kuhestān: a district that begins south of Bost (Post). Bost lies to the south of Nishapur and contains the village Toroq.
143. Q.9/111 "they" refers to the faithful.
144. an atheist: *dahri* - a term which shifts meaning from one period to another but generally signifies someone who doesn't believe in religion, a materialist.
145. Bu'l-Ḥasan (or Bu'l-Ḥoseyn)-e Nuri (d. 908?): companion of Sari-ye Saqāṭi and Moḥammad b. 'Ali-ye Qaṣṣāb in Baghdad. Hojviri mentions a Sufi group called the Nuriya who were Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Nuri's followers.
146. Q.17/44
147. "they": the Shaikh, or perhaps Friends of God in general. God speaks through them and they are dead unto their Selves.
148. verily: *enna* - an emphatic particle in Arabic, introducing an oath.
149. Q.28/85

NOTES TO ANECDOTES AND INSTRUCTIVE POINTS

1. Ka'b al-Aḥbār: a learned Jew who converted to Islam during the caliphate of Abu Bakr. He is often cited as the source for stories concerning the Torah and the Prophets of Israel.
2. Bu Yazid-e Bastāmi: Bāyazid - see note 27, Bk. I.
3. by isolating yourself from the world: *tafrid*. There is a play on words involving *fard* (single) and *tafrid* (making something single).
4. Life passes out of me but I smile: the lover dies a sweet death hearing the beloved's name mentioned.
5. Šebli: see note 80, Bk. I.
6. the science of God's Oneness: *'elm-e towḥid* - *'elm* means knowledge, exact science or religious learning. The Sufis also use the word to designate mystical knowledge, knowledge of the inner self (*bāṭen*). For God's Oneness see note 29, Auth. Intro.
7. Yusof b. al-Ḥoseyn (d. 916): a Sufi shaikh from Rey who was one of the companions of Zu'l-Nun, the Egyptian. One of Joneyd's surviving letters (*Rasā'el*) is to Yusof b. al-Ḥoseyn. See Dr. Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of Junayd*, Gibb Memorial Series XXII, London, 1962.
8. Joneyd: see note 55, Bk. I.

9. Zu'l-Nun, the Egyptian (d. 859?): famous early Sufi shaikh whose alleged sayings are frequently quoted in later works. Abu No'eym cites several of his prayers and poems in the *Helyat al-Owliyāʾ*.
10. Bu Ḥasan-e Pušanjī (d. 959): Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Aḥmad was originally from Pušanj, a small town near Herat. He had been a companion of Abu ʿOsmān-e Ḥiri and Ebn-e ʿAṭā, and presided over one of the earliest mentioned *kānaqāhs* in Nishapur (Meier, p. 307).
11. Bu ʿAbdollāh al-Rāzi (d. 1014): Abu ʿAbdollāh Ḥoseyn b. Aḥmad al-Rāzi was famous for his asceticism and is mentioned several times in Solami's *Ṭabaqāt* as a transmitter of the deeds and sayings of earlier Sufis.
12. God's decrees: *aḥkām* - what God has decreed shall happen to you in the world.
13. Joneyd: see note 55, Bk. I.
14. Šebli: see note 80, Bk. I.
15. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
16. Moʿāviya b. Abi Sofyān (d. 680): was the founder of the Omayyad Caliphate and proverbial for his political skill and his forbearance (*ḥelm*).
17. *Kalila and Demna*: a collection of animal fables translated from Sanskrit into Pahlavi and from Pahlavi into Arabic and Persian.
18. someone like me: the bedouin is often portrayed as a man of unbridled passion.
19. Šebli: see note 80, Bk. I.
20. the Arabic verb: in Arabic the emphatic particle *qad* is positioned before the verb.
21. their city's tide (*madd*): the city of Basra is located on the river Euphrates which periodically rises. A thousand years ago alluvial deposits had not yet made Basra so distant from the coast of the Persian Gulf. "The flow constitutes a miracle and an advantage for the inhabitants of Basra. The water inundates it twice a day, rises into the canals, waters the gardens and helps the boats reach their anchorage." (Al-Maqdesi, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm*, Leiden, 1906, p. 124-5)
22. Šebli (Abu Bakr): see note 80, Bk. I.
23. Yaḥyā-ye Maʿāz (d. 872): Abu Zakariyā Yaḥyā b. Maʿāz-e Rāzi was a mystic particularly known as a representative of cheerfulness and hope in view of God's mercy. Meier sees him as an important predecessor to Shaikh Abu Saʿid in this respect. See Meier, chpt. 9, pp. 149-184.
24. bondsman: see note 115, Bk. I and note 11, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
25. the commander's court: Šafīʿi-Kadkani takes *asb k^vāstan* - calling for someone's horse -- as referring to the rank the person holds (note on p. 589 of his edition of the text). Here the lover has experienced good fortune, as if he has been promoted to the rank of commander (*mir*).
26. Sahl b. ʿAbdollāh: see note 23, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.

Notes

27. pretension: *da'vā* - pretension in the sense of laying claim to something.
28. Moḥammad b. Kašnām: either Abu 'Ali Moḥammad b. Moḥammad b. Kašnām (d. 1015), who was from Nasaf and a scholar of Traditions from the Prophet, or a member of the Kašnāmi family in Nishapur which produced several scholars of *ḥadīṣ* studies.
29. Commander of the Faithful: title of the caliph, i.e. successor to the Prophet Moḥammad and head of the Muslim community.
30. 'Ali: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
31. Joneyd: see note 55, Bk. I.
32. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
33. Kufa: an important city in Iraq on the river Euphrates.
34. Sari-ye Saqāṭi: see note 55, Bk. I, on Joneyd.
35. Joneyd: see note 55, Bk. I.
36. Q. 16/75
37. Abu Bakr-e Kattāni: Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. 'Ali-ye Kattāni (d. 934), known as "the Lamp of the Sanctuary (of Mecca)" (*serāj al-ḥaram*), was originally from Baghdad. He had been a companion of the famous Sufis Joneyd, Abu Sa'īd al-Karrāz and Nuri in Baghdad before beginning his long retreat at Mecca where he died.
38. Ḥejr: a semi-circular area of space between the Ka'ba and a three foot high wall (*ḥaṭīm*) to the north-west of the Ka'ba. The graves of Ishmael and his mother Hagar are said to be located within the Ḥejr.
39. Roof Cutter: *nāvdān* - located at one end of the Ka'ba's roof.
40. single purification: implies that during this space of time he did not lose his ritual purity in any of the usual ways.
41. Banu Šeyba Gate: an archway situated opposite to the north-east facade of the Ka'ba.
42. Maqām-e Ebrāhim: a small structure which contained a stone with the imprint of Abraham's feet, i.e. where he stood while building the Ka'ba. The building was located between the Banu Šeyba Gate and the north-east facade of the Ka'ba, before being destroyed by the Wahhābis.
43. exalted Traditions: *kabar-e 'ālī* - a Tradition with few transmitters (*rovāṭ*) linking it to the Prophet, as opposed to a Tradition which is *nāzel*, i.e. of less authority because of having a longer *esnād*.
44. Abu Horeyra (d. 678): was one of the Companions (*ṣeḥāba*) of the Prophet Moḥammad, as well as one of the *Aṣḥāb-e ṣoffa* (see note 4, Bk. I). He is accredited with having transmitted more Traditions from the Prophet than anyone else. Zohri (d. 742): had known the Prophet's Ten Companions and was one of the first persons to collect Traditions. Ma'mar (d. 824-825): a jurist and traditionist originally from Basra who was the first person to compose a book of Traditions. 'Abd al-Razzāq-e Šan'āni (d. 827): a famous traditionist from Šan'a in Yemen and the hero of a Persian romance (*Dāstān-e Šeyk-e Šan'ān*).

45. *Keẓr*: see note 66, Bk. I.
46. *Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq*: see note 103, Bk. I.
47. *Bu 'Ali-ye Šabbu'i* (d. after 988): a jurist (*faqih*) and traditionist (*mohaddes*) famous throughout Khorasan particularly for his teaching of *Bokāri's Ṣaḥiḥ*.
48. *Ṣaḥiḥ* of *Bokāri*: see note 289, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
49. 'this higher meaning': same as "this affair". See note 15, Auth. Intro.
50. 'this matter': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
51. *Razīq*: a river that flows through Marv and the name of a large neighborhood of the city, situated on the river's bank. Yazdagerd, the last of the Sassanian kings, was killed in a mill worked by the river's current.
52. I have taken down in dictation: a student of Traditions and the religious sciences takes dictation from his teacher.
53. *Sari-ye Saqāṭi*: see note 55, Bk. I, on *Joneyd*.
54. *Mount al-Lokkān*: name of a mountain chain situated between Antioch (in Syria) and Tarsus, where ascetics resided by way of withdrawing from the world.
55. often: reading *besyār* for *baššār*. For *Abu'l-'Abbās(-e Qaṣṣāb)* see note 98, Bk. I.
56. *rak'ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
57. *Joneyd*: see note 55, Bk. I.
58. *Morta'eš* (d. 939-40): *Abu 'Abdollāh b. Moḥammad* from Nishapur was first a student of *Abu Ḥafṣ* and *Abu 'Osmān*, and then associated with *Joneyd* in Baghdad where he ended his days. He was particularly known for his subtle witticisms (*nokāṭ*). See note 56, Bk. I.
59. *Sofyān-e Šowri* (d. 778): ascetic and traditionist who founded his own *mazhab* though it did not survive. He had to leave his home city of Kufa because of his attitude toward the government authorities. He consequently lived in Yemen, then Mecca and he died in Basra.
60. weavers use in their work: presumably the weaver is more comfortable sitting on the edge of the hole with his legs stretched out.
61. *Bāyazid*: see note 27, Bk. I.
62. I would be put to shame: despite his apparent high mystic station, *Bāyazid* acknowledges his imperfection and his absolute dependence on God's grace and mercy.
63. *Ostād Bu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq*: see note 103, Bk. I.
64. Q. 79/40
65. *Eblis*: the proper name of the devil, i.e. Satan. In the *Qor'ān* he is sometimes referred to as belonging to the *Jinn* (Q. 18/48), at other times as being "with" the angels (Q. 2/32). But the latter quotation does not necessarily mean that *Eblis* himself was an angel. The angels are conceived of as lacking free will and therefore incapable of disobedience. *Eblis* disobeys God (through the sin of pride) and is cursed by God. He is generally characterized as "the enemy of God and mankind".

Notes

66. Bu Bakr-e Jowzaqi (d. 998): Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh-e Jowzaqi was a famous ascetic and traditionist who taught in Nishapur. His *nesbat* comes from the neighborhood of Jowzaq in Nishapur.
67. a Sufi: *yak-i az 'azizān* - one of "the dear ones". See note 6, Bk. I.
68. Maḥmud: the great Ġaznavid sultan. See note 11, Bk. I.
69. Zakariyā: Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, who when pursued hides in a tree which opens for him. In the Islamic tradition he is considered to have been a prophet and to have died a martyr's death.
70. transport you into *samā'*: *samā' kardan* - with a transitive sense like *samā' dādan* (see top of p. 180), meaning to inspire someone to experience a higher spiritual state. For *samā'* see note 8, Bk. I.
71. the seven parts: *haft andām* - arms, legs, head, chest and abdomen, i.e. the whole body.
72. Q.76/21
73. Q.21/81
74. Bu Ḥafṣ (d. 878-9): Abu Ḥafṣ 'Omar b. Maslama, though an illiterate blacksmith, became a famous Sufi and was the head of the Malāmatiya in Nishapur (see note 18, Bk. II, Chpt. 3). He was a spiritual influence on such well-known Sufi personalities as Abu 'Osmān-e Ḥiri (see note 107, Bk. I). See *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, trans. by R.A. Nicholson, p. 123 sq.
75. Abu Bakr-e Ṣeddiq (d. 634): the first caliph (632-634). He acquired the title Ṣeddiq (he who attests to the truth) because he was the first to believe in the Prophet's nocturnal ascent to Heaven (*me'rāj*).
76. Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni: see note 178, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
77. 'Abdollāh b. al-Mobārak (d. 797): was a mystic and theologian of Turkish origin from Marv. He was a prolific author and is said to have transferred residence from Marv to Kufa to escape the consequences of his scholarly fame.
78. the belt of his infidelity: *zonnār* - in the Muslim world during the Middle Ages Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians were forced to wear a distinctive belt or sash. The word then acquired the metaphorical meaning of unbelief, impiety, and especially a lack of sincerity in one's religious faith (the meaning it has in its second mention here).
79. A bedouin: see note 18 of this section.
80. Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
81. Ostād Bu Eshāq-e Esfarāyeni (d. 1027): a well-known learned scholar and Aṣarite theologian (see note 44, Bk. I). He was born in Esfarāyen but taught in Nishapur. Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri attended his *majles*.
82. Solami: see note 78, Bk. I.
83. Abu'l-Qāsem al-Joneyd: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
84. Abu Sahl al-Ṣo'luqi (d. 980): a jurist, *mofti*, gnostic (*'āref*) and man of letters. He was originally from Isfahan but was educated and lived in Nishapur.

85. moist delicacy: *tar-nāna* - literally something eaten on bread, relish, condiment. There is a word play here based on the bread (*nān*) being dry or wet (*tar*).
86. has said: this story and the Arabic verses it contains appear in earlier works such as the *Rowzat al-'Oqalā'* of Ebn Hebbān, the *Helyat al-Owliyā'* of Abu Noʿeym and *al-Faraj ba'd al-Šedda* of Qāzi Tanuki. For further discussion and bibliographical references see p. 780 of Šaffi-Kadkani's edition of the text.
87. a ship: *kešti-ye 'arus* - 'arus seems to indicate a finer type ship. See Šaffi-Kadkani's note on p. 594 of his edition of the text.
88. Q. 6/62
89. the savour: *zowq* - taste (of food); delight, joy; ecstatic joy.
90. The Dog of Byzantium: *kalb al-Rum* - the Dog of Rome referring to the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (Eastern Roman Empire).
91. 'Omar: 'Omar b. al-Kaṭṭāb, the second caliph (634-644).
92. Yaḥyā b. Ma'āz al-Rāzi: see note 23 of this section.
93. Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan: see note 48, Bk. I.
94. *tarina-vā'*: a dish consisting of bread, vinegar and herbs which is presumably served cold. See *The Tadhkiratu'l-Awliyā'*, ed. by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1905-1907, vol. 2, preface 15.
95. Sultan Maḥmud: see note 11, Bk. I.
96. he is not the one to consider!: Sultan Maḥmud is merely God's instrument and not important in himself. Literally: don't see him!
97. Bu Ḥamza-ye Nuri: either Bu Ḥamza-ye Baḡdādi, a companion of Sari-ye Saqāṭi (d. 865) or Bu Ḥamza-ye Korāsāni, who was a companion of Joneyd (d. 910).
98. Bu'l-Ḥasan-e Nuri: see note 145, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
99. Oveys-e Qarani: an ascetic originally from Yemen who allegedly died at the Battle of Šeffin (657) fighting for 'Ali against Mo'āviya. What is distinctive about Oveys is that he was counted as a Companion of the Prophet Moḥammad, despite never having met him in the flesh. Because of Oveys' inward closeness and devotion to him, the Prophet conferred this exceptional status upon Oveys. He therefore came to serve as the prototype for the initiate who is joined to his *pir* exclusively in the world of the spirit, often after the *pir* has departed from life.
100. Q. 50/16
101. Bu Ya'qub-e Nahrajuri (d. 941-2): was originally from Nahrajur, a town in Kuzestān (S.W. Iran) but he lived most of his life in Baghdad and Mecca, and was a companion of Joneyd.
102. Šebli: see note 80, Bk. I.
103. placing his turban band around his neck: as a sign of submission and humility.
104. Bu Bakr-e Vāseṭi: see note 22, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
105. Šebli: see note 80, Bk. I.

Notes

106. Bu 'Osmān-e Maġrebi (d. 983-4): a famous Sufi who was originally from a village near Kairouan in Tunisia (part of the Maġreb - the West) but he lived and died in Nishapur.
107. Moḥammad b. 'Ali al-Qaṣṣāb (d. 889): a Sufi from Baghdad who was one of Sari-ye Saqaṭi's companions and a teacher of Joneyd.
108. Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Ali b. al-Moḡannā (d. circa 1010): was from Astarābād and had met many learned scholars and Sufis including Šebli.
109. Šebli (Abu Bakr): see note 80, Bk. I. Šebli was noted for the intensity of his mystic states, as is illustrated at the end of this account.
110. Q.3/152
111. Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. al-Ḥasan: see note 48, Bk. I.
112. Abu 'Ali al-Faqih: see note 43, Bk. I.
113. 'Abdollāh b. 'Omar (d. 693): the son of the second caliph, 'Omar, and a Companion of the Prophet. He was renowned for his piety and upright character, and has transmitted a great number of Traditions.
114. Q.27/89
115. 'Otbi (d. 842): an Arab man of letters. He is especially known for having transmitted stories about famous figures of the first two centuries of Islam, and their sayings.
116. Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malek (d. 738): an outstanding military commander, renowned for his victories in Armenia and Asia Minor. In August 716, he laid siege to Constantinople. His father, 'Abd al-Malek, was the great Omayyad caliph but since Maslama's mother was a slave, he was ineligible to become caliph himself.
117. Valid (d. 714): the Omayyad caliph, and brother of Maslama.
118. Šābet: Šābet b. Abi Šābet al-Zohri, known as Šābet al-Bonāni - the famous transmitter of stories who is often cited in Ṭabari's great compendium of history. He died between 740-45 at the age of eighty-six.
119. Dā'ud al-Ṭā'i: see note 56, Bk. I.
120. 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
121. pre-eternity: *azal* - eternity extending backwards in time, as distinct from *abad*, eternity that extends into the future.
122. Abu 'Ali-ye Faqih: see note 43, Bk. I.
123. Rābe'a (d. 801): Rābe'a al-'Adaviya was a famous female mystic from Basra, noted for her extreme love of God. See Margaret Smith, *Rābi'a the Mystic*, Cambridge, 1928.
124. Abu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb: see note 98, Bk. I.
125. Q.112/1
126. Loqmān-e Sarakṣi: see note 47, Bk. I.
127. Ostād Abu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq: see note 103, Bk. I.
128. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
129. Q.26/212
130. Q.67/10
131. 'Āyeša-ye Šeddiqa (d.678): the daughter of Abu Bakr and the third and favorite wife of the Prophet Moḥammad. She played a leading part in opposing the Caliph 'Osmān and was allied with Ṭalḥa and al-

- Zobeyr against 'Ali. The Battle of the Camel (656) was thus named because the fiercest fighting took place around the camel bearing her litter. 'Ali was victorious but treated 'Āyeša with respect. Thereafter she was not active in politics.
132. a verse: reciting or chanting verses implies performing the *samā'* (see note 8, Bk. I).
 133. Q. 39/18
 134. Q. 42/19
 135. Q. 12/37
 136. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
 137. Well-appointed House: *beyt al-ma'mur* - the celestial archetype of the Ka'ba. See E.J.W. Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, 6 vols., London, 1900-09, vol. I, p. 37.
 138. 'the tongue of reality': *be-zafān-e ḥāl* - "with the tongue of one's state or condition", the language of essence, i.e. not with words or utterances. See Translator's Intro., p. 57.
 139. a face with a beard: *ru'-i va riš-i* - "a face and a beard" is here a metaphor for perceiving no more than outward appearances.
 140. Bošanqān: the Arabicized form of Pošangān/Pušangān which was a beauty spot one *farsang* from Nishapur. See p. 183 where Shaikh Abu Sa'id gives a banquet in Pušangān for the people of Nishapur.
 141. *K^Vāja Bu 'Ali-ye Tarsusi*: see note 16, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
 142. Q. 34/13
 143. 'Omāra: Abu Maṣṣūr 'Omāra b. Moḥammad-e Marvazi, a poet of the Sāmānid period who lived long enough to compose some panegyric poems in honor of Sultan Maḥmud of Ġazna (became sultan in 998) – fragments of which survive.
 144. *K^Vāja Bu Bakr-e Mo'addeb*: Abu Bakr Aḥmad b. 'Ali al-Mo'addeb al-Beyhaqi was a disciple of Shaikh Abu Sa'id and a tutor to the Shaikh's children. He is mentioned in this capacity in Ebn-e Fondoq's *History of Beyhaq*.
 145. generosity: *javānmardi* - see note 135, Bk. I.
 146. I have written down: see note 86, Bk. I.
 147. Fāṭema, the Splendid (d.633): the daughter of the Prophet Moḥammad and his first wife *Kadija*. She married 'Ali and was the mother of Ḥasan and Ḥoseyn. In the eyes of the Shiites Fāṭema represents all that is divine in womanhood and the Sunnis honor her to almost the same extent. She is often known by her title Mistress of Women (*sayyeda al-nesā'*).
 148. five *takbirs*: a *takbir* is saying "Allāh akbar" - God is great! The Sunnis generally require four *takbirs* to be said over a corpse but there was disagreement concerning the correct number. The Shiites and some other sects required five *takbirs*.
 149. 'Alavi: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.

Notes

150. Joveyni, Şābuni and Qoşeyri: see note 142, 146, and 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, respectively.
151. Q. 43/80
152. "this affair": see note 15, Auth. Intro.
153. 'Ali-ye Şandali: see note 66, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
154. you Sufis who... : the text is defective, but clearly an insult is intended. See p. 600 of Şafī'i-Kadkani's edition of the text for a discussion of the passage's possible meanings.
155. the Narrow Road: *şerāṭ-e bārik* - according to the Traditions of the Prophet this is the bridge over Hell, being thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword.
156. Q. 1/6
157. the baker: he is no doubt a supporter (*moḥebb*) of 'Ali-ye Şandali. See note 13, Auth. Intro.
158. Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni: see note 142, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
159. One of the names of God: *al-salām* is used as a name of God in Q. 59/23.
160. 'Amma: means a paternal aunt, and is here used by everybody as her name.
161. *čādor*: is a full length veil which is worn over a woman's clothes and covers her completely.
162. strangers: *nā-maḥramān* - a rigorous definition would be "persons not lying within the forbidden degrees of marriage". What is more pertinent to the context is that these are persons not closely enough related to a woman to be allowed to see her unveiled.
163. *Keẓr*: see note 66, Bk. I.
164. a *farajī*... of *fuṭa* cloth: see notes 203 and 44, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
165. Q. 47/19
166. Q. 2/24
167. a charm: *ḥerz* - charm or amulet. In the introduction to his edition of the text (p. one hundred and twenty-five), Şafī'i-Kadkani gives details concerning the extent to which quatrains attributed to Shaikh Abu Sa'īd were used to cure the sick. This poem in particular was very popular and several symbolic interpretations of it were written at a later date. See the *Howrā'īya Treatise* at the end of Valentin Zhukovsky's edition of the *Asrār al-Towḥīd* for an example.
168. *Rezvān*: the guardian of the entrance to Paradise.
169. *Abdāls* (pl. of *badal*): a category of high ranking holy men thought to be forty in number. See note 12, Auth. Intro., on *owtād*.
170. Rum: Asia Minor -- here specifically the territories which the Byzantines controlled there.
171. Realm of Warfare: *dār al-ḥarb* - the House of War, i.e. the non-Muslim part of the world where it is legitimate to wage war.
172. Eblis: Satan. See note 65 of this section.
173. this present company of men: warriors for the faith. Satan has no business with them.

174. KVāja Maṣʿad: should probably be Maṣʿad (i.e. with the unvellarized consonant), as the spelling in the text is not attested elsewhere.
175. KVāja Imam Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān-e Nowqāni: see note 129, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
176. knower of God: ʿāref - a gnostic, one who knows God through direct, intuitional knowledge (*maʿrefat*), not through learning and intellect (ʿelm and ʿaql).
177. Mikālīs' Caravanserai: the Mikālī family of Nishapur was famous for its men of letters, scholars and high ranking appointees in government service.
178. Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿĀref al-Nowqāni: see note 208, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
179. Shaikh Aḥmad-e Ṭāyarāni (d. beginning of 11th century): a Sufi personality who was originally from Saraks but he may have lived in Ṭābarān (his *nesbat* is recorded elsewhere as Ṭābarāni). He eventually died in Nishapur and was buried in the cemetery of the neighborhood of Hira.
180. Ostād Bu ʿAli-ye Daqqāq and Qoṣeyri: see note 103, Bk. I and 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, respectively.
181. a pilgrim's sacrifice: *badana* - a sacrifice one carries out while performing the pilgrimage rites at Mecca.
182. Bāyazid-e Bastāmi: see note 27, Bk. I.
183. *and what do these envious ones say?*: the text is corrupt.
184. KVāja ʿAli-ye Kabbāz: see anecdote about Shaikh Abu Saʿīd's visit to Pir Bu ʿAli-ye Siyāh on pp. 268-269.
185. Q. 96/19
186. Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
187. pious endowments: *owqāf* - property and its income donated for charitable or religious purposes.
188. Shaikh Bu'l-ʿAbbās-e Qaṣṣāb: see note 98, Bk. I.
189. Kezr: see note 66, Bk. I.
190. "companionship": *ṣoḥbat* - companionship in the sense of a disciple receiving close guidance from a spiritual master.
191. Kotan: see note 291, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.

NOTES TO BOOK TWO, CHAPTER THREE.

1. soul's desires: desires of the *nafs* - the carnal soul, the source of animal desires. See note 2, Auth. Intro.
2. Q.78/40 -- which continues, "...*verily his place is in Paradise.*"
3. Q.12/106
4. Q.4/48
5. seven bodily parts: see note 71, Instr. Points.

Notes

6. **Ṭāḡut**: often defined as an ancient idol at Mecca. However, some Qorʾānic commentators take it to be a name of Satan, and others to be any human embodiment of the transgression of the boundaries set by God (the verb *ṭāḡa* in Arabic having the meaning "to transgress, exceed").
7. Q.2/256
8. Q.46/13
9. his repentance: true repentance breaks the power of the carnal soul.
10. necessary: *vāyestan=bāyestan* - to be necessary. You, your existence, your you-ness is not necessary and should not exist.
11. Recollection: *zehr* - also means the lengthy repetition of a prayer formula such as: "*There is no god but Allah.*"
12. Q.49/13
13. Q.6/126
14. the Throne and the Footstool: which belong to God and are referred to several times in the Qorʾān.
15. Q.65/3
16. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
17. Bāyazid: see note 27, Bk. I.
18. **Malāmātī**: from *malāmat* (blame) - follower of a spiritual current of thought according to which the devotee conceals his piety and deliberately brings blame and reproach upon himself. Although many of the features of the *Malāmātiya* are present in the Sufis (including Abu Saʿīd himself), the movement was originally distinct from Sufism when it appeared in Nishapur and should not be designated as "a current of Sufism". See note 78, Bk. I, on Solami and his *Resālat al-Malāmātiya*
19. be made to appear to you: the text may be faulty here.
20. Q.12/37
21. Q.55/1
22. Q.67/30
23. Transoxania: see note 79, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
24. Eblis: see note 65, Instr. Points.
25. Q.28/76
26. unsaid... undone... : the different MSS give variant readings.
27. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
28. Q.27/90
29. Moʿāz b. Jabal (d. 640): a Companion of the Prophet Moḥammad and one of the six compilers of the Qorʾān.
30. the affirmer of God's Oneness: *movahhed* - one who has truly (in the mystic sense) acknowledged God's Oneness, i.e. who, when declaring: "*There is no god but Allah*", affirms that God is the only real active agent. See note 29, Auth. Intro., on *Asrār al-Towḥīd*, as well as Meier p. 127 - on the meaning of there being only one *Handlungs-subjekt*.
31. Q.42/19

32. Q.10/58
33. The Two Angels, who record all a person's good and bad actions.
34. 'Azza: the beloved of the famous Arab poet *Koṣayyer* (d. 723). *Koṣayyer* was an extremist Shiite and lived for most of his life in Medina.
35. 'Arafāt: see note 10, Bk. III, Chpt. 1.
36. an animal and the living: *ḥayavān o ḥayy* - a wordplay based on both words being formed from the same root.
37. Self: *nafs* - the carnal soul or Self. There is a wordplay based on *naḥas* (breath) and *nafs* having the same consonants.
38. chivalrous generosity: *fotovvat* - denotes the full range of praise-worthy qualities which are significant for the chivalrous young man (*fatā*), especially liberality (*karam, saḳāʾ*). In Sufi vocabulary: "placing other people above one's self", altruism, self-denial, immunity against disappointment, indulgence for other people's shortcomings. In the course of time, the concept acquired the meaning of chivalry, knighthood (under Caliph al-Nāṣer le-Din Allāh, 1180-1225) and, somewhat later still, *fotovvat* became one of the essential elements in the Islamic guild institutions which took over many features of the mystic fraternities. See note 135, Bk. I, on *javānmardān*.
39. Jinn: see note 73, Bk. I.
40. 'they': the ones who have completed the process of spiritual purification and reached the goal.
41. their name: *darvišān* (pl. of *darviš*) - there is a word play here involving *darvišān* and *dar-e vey iṣān* (they are the door unto Him).
42. Bu'l-'Abbās-e Qaṣṣāb: see note 98, Bk. I.
43. That: the burning mentioned a few lines above.
44. Abraham: *pur-e Āzar*, i.e. the son of *Āzar* - Abraham's patronymic. The Qor'ānic spelling of his father's name is *Āzar*, perhaps changed in the poem for the sake of a pun (*āzar*=fire). According to the Qor'ān, the tyrannical Nimrod tried to kill Abraham by putting him in a fire but the flames had no effect on him.
45. Q.6/71
46. Q.24/54
47. Q.4/80
48. Eblis: the Devil. See note 65, Instr. Points.
49. Q.7/12
50. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
51. who have no work: do not see themselves as agents in their acts. God is the Agent.
52. a mine of musk: your hair is so black it is the ultimate source of (black) musk. By the same token, you have sought "the other" (the beloved, God) with such ardor that "you" no longer exist. You are totally "that".
53. to cock my hat: *kolāh-guṣa be-kas-i rāst kardan* - a metaphor for being able to stand up to someone on equal terms.

Notes

54. this is a sign: having friends is a sign of one's relationship with God, the only real Helper.
55. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
56. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
57. Q.35/10 What follows from here to the end is very condensed in the Persian and the meaning is not entirely clear.
58. the spiritual master of Karāqān: Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karāqāni. See the note 178, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
59. Qor'ānic reader: *qorrā'* - see note 156, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
60. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
61. the dog of the Seven Sleepers: the Seven Sleepers were Christians who hid in a cave to avoid being persecuted by the Roman regime, perhaps under Diocletian. They fell asleep and when they woke up and came out of the cave, it was centuries later and Christianity had been established as the state religion. According to the Muslim version of the legend, their dog Qeṭmir evolved and acquired certain virtues because of his contact with these holy men. The transformation illustrates the positive effect of associating with men of spiritual distinction.
62. This question seems to be prompted by the Shaikh just having asserted that the True can be seen, whereas the darvish cannot be seen.
63. Q.29/45
64. Q.18/107
65. Q.25/70
66. extend your arm: presumably to protect the person, to stop him from falling into the pit.
67. Q.21/81 The original sense is that Solomon was given command even over the wind. Here the sense is taken to be that his kingship, like all worldly power, was of no real value.
68. *Ṣakr-e Jenni*: he possessed Solomon's magic ring for a while.
69. Q.38/35 The kingdom should be so great that no other ruler in the future shall be worthy of ruling over one as large.
70. Q.2/138
71. Q.45/23
72. Q.26/13
73. the cave of *Ḥerā'*: *Ḥerā'* is the name of a mountain near Mecca where the Prophet Moḥammad frequently retired to contemplate.
74. 'Recite!': Q.90/1
75. 'I do not know how to recite': the Prophet was illiterate.
76. the hireling of Kadija and the orphan of Abu Ṭāleb: Kadija was the Prophet Moḥammad's well-off wife who was older than him, and Abu Ṭāleb was Moḥammad's uncle who had looked after him as a child when his parents passed away.
77. Q.29/56
78. Eblis: Satan. See note 65, Instr. Points.
79. Q.28/68

80. Q.10/58
81. oh son of Abu'l-Keyr: keyr - means "better" and occurs in the previous Qor'ānic quotation – hence the pun on the Shaikh's name.
82. Bu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin: see note 13, Bk. I.
83. they: *išān* - but possibly another example of the Shaikh referring to himself in the 3rd person plural. See note 2, Bk. I.
84. These centuries are, of course, reckoned according to the Muslim era, i.e. from the Prophet's migration (*hejra*) from Mecca to Medina in 622.
85. the first person: Eblis, Satan. See note 65, Instr. Points.
86. Jāber b. 'Abdollāh (d. circa 700): a Companion of the Prophet and transmitter of many Traditions.
87. I: according to this interpretation, God is authorizing the Prophet (as an exceptional case) to use the pronoun "I".
88. Q.12/108
89. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
90. Q.48/3
91. a patent of Friendship: *manšur-e velāyat* - an edict conferring *velāyat*, i.e. governorship or the spiritual "office" of Friend of God (*vali*).
92. 'God is all-powerful': *lā ḥawl* - part of an apotropaic formula, pronounced when one is facing immediate danger.
93. Q.38/35
94. Q.38/35 Solomon's request is for a kingdom greater than what anyone else shall ever receive. The "latent" sense, however, is meant to be that such worldly power is unfit because it alienates man from God.
95. 'Omar-e Kaṭṭāb: the second caliph (634-644).
96. mystical experience... devotional exercise: *vāred/verd* - wordplay based on both nouns having the same root consonants. *Verd* means a litany, devotional recitations.
97. Q.6/76
98. Self... respiration: *nafs/nafas* - wordplay.
99. knowledge: *ma'refat* - gnosis, intuitive or experiential knowledge of God. See p. 92, where, in connection with Loqmān, *'elm* and *ma'refat* are contrasted.
100. knowledge: *ma'refat* - see previous note.
101. The simple children's jingle is taken in a metaphorical sense, i.e. before one can know God, one must undergo a process of purification.
102. Knowing God intuitively: *ma'refat* - see note 59, Bk. I.
103. reciting God's names: *zēkr* - see note 11, Bk. II, Chpt. 3.
104. Q.35/16
105. Q.5/83
106. Q.5/54
107. Q.3/74

Notes

108. Divine Oneness: *towḥid*. Besides meaning the profession of faith that there is no god but Allah, *towḥid* is often given an ontological and intuitional definition by Sufis. See note 29, Auth. Intro., and for further discussion: M. Horten, *Indische Strömungen in der islamischen Mystik, II Lexikon wichtigster Termini der islamischen Mystik*, Heidelberg 1928, p. 117, Der Tauḥid.
109. to hear: *samāʿ* (see note 8, Bk. I) is derived from the Arabic verb *samʿa*, to hear.
110. Q.28/81
111. in truth: *be-taḥqiq* - only the Sufis possess 'hearing' (*samāʿ*) and perform the *samāʿ* correctly, i.e. they hear correctly.
112. *Sonnat*: Tradition - see note 38, Auth. Intro.
113. unreckoned: *lā ʿadad le-mowteh* - his death has no number. The text may be corrupt.
114. Q.17/70
115. Followers: *Tābeʿun* - persons belonging to the first generation after the Prophet Moḥammad and who knew one of the Prophet's Companions (see note 8, Auth. Intro.).
116. Bu'l-Qāsem Beṣr-e Yāsin: see note 13, Bk. I.
117. 'this higher meaning': *in maʿnī* - the same as "this affair". See note 15, Auth. Intro.
118. inward knowledge of God: *maʿrefat* - see note 99 of this section.
119. *The Classes of Female Recluses*: *Ṭabaqāt-e Nāsekāt* - a lost work of Bu ʿAbd al-Raḥmān-e Solami (see note 78, Bk. I).
120. Bu'l-Faḏl-e Ḥasan: Shaikh Abu Saʿid's *pir-e ṣoḥbat* (see note 53, Bk. I). For the Shaikh's relationship with Bu'l-Faḏl, see the passage in the text beginning on p. 87.
121. Bu'l-Qāsem Beṣr-e Yāsin: see note 13, Bk. I.
122. Bu Bakr-e Ṣeddiq: the first caliph. See note 75, Instr. Points.
123. *k^vāja*: title of respect originally accorded to men of worldly rank. See the note 11, Bk. II, Chpt. 2., on *k^vājagi*.
124. This poem appears earlier on p. 80.
125. In the notes (p. 619) to his edition of the text, Šaffi-Kadkani points out that the word *yār*, which I translate as "my love", is here equivalent to 'ayyār. The 'ayyār was a bandit supposedly adhering to an altruistic code of "chivalry". See note 38, Bk. II, Chpt. 3, on *fotoṣvat* and note 135, Bk. I, on *javānmardān*. The wonders of Khorasan refer to the awe-inspiring heroic feats of the Khorasani 'ayyārs. The Shaikh has recited these verses as an enthusiastic reaction to the darvish's question.
126. Q.38/75
127. Q.15/29
128. Ishmael: Esmāʿil - according to Muslim tradition, the son whom Abraham was prepared to sacrifice in obedience to God.

129. willing becomes arising: *k^vāst/kāst* - the contrast (which is built around wordplay) is between willing and standing up, arising (in order to do something). Meier (p. 96) takes *kāst* in the sense of arising, occurring: *Entstehung*.
130. 'freeman of the realm': *ḥorr-e mamlakat* - but Meier (p. 96, footnote 17) suggests that in this case the expression may mean someone who has been newly freed from slavery, being the opposite of '*abdu mamlakatin* - new slave (someone whose parents were free). That would be to take *mamlakat*, not in the sense of kingdom or realm, but as possessing.
131. chivalrous generosity: see note 38, Bk. II, Chpt. 3, and note 135, Bk. I.
132. his celestial ascension: *me'rāj* - see note 18, Bk. I.
133. Ja'far (al-Šādeq): see note 29, Bk. I.
134. Q.63/8
135. Ja'far (al-Šādeq): see note 29, Bk. I.
136. The contrast is between the *pir-e moḥaqqueq* and the *morid-e moṣaddeq*. The former has actualized the Truth (*ḥaqiqat*) and the latter has set out on his quest with sincerity, truthfulness (*ṣedq*).
137. become a goal... be able to have a disciple: he must be a *morād* (past participle: "sought after") in order to have a *morid* (active present participle: "seeker") -- terms for master and disciple.
138. for creation's sake... for the sake of God: the contrast between *kalq* and *Kodā* is a thematic one.
139. manly: he must be an '*ayyār*. See note 125 of this section.
140. These requirements concerning the *pir* and the disciple were translated into Arabic by Majd al-Din-e Baḡdādi (d. 1219?) in his *Toḥfat al-Barara* (on the *pir*: beginning of Chpt. Three; on the disciple: beginning of Chpt. Four). Many of Majd al-Din's disciples played an important role in the development and spread of Sufism after the Mongol invasion. (MS in the Ketāb-kāna-ye Majles-e Šurā-ye Melli, 24, number 148, and see Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, 2nd ed., Leiden, 1943-1949, 2 vols.: vol I, p. 439).
141. Companions of the Porch: *Aṣṣāb-e ṣoffa* - see note 4, Bk. I.
142. *Sonnat*: Tradition - see note 38, Auth. Intro.
143. Q.74/4
144. Q.9/108
145. Q.24/37
146. Q.15/98
147. Q.17/79
148. Q.51/18
149. Q.17/78
150. Q.52/49
151. Q.6/52

Notes

152. Q.5/1
153. with him: the Prophet Moḥammad.
154. Q.24/62
155. Q.3/195
156. Al-Barā' b. 'Āzeb: one of the Prophet's Companions who participated in many military campaigns. At the end of his life, he retired to Kufa and withdrew from the world.
157. Q.49/7
158. my candle falls: see note 83, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.

NOTES TO PRAYERS

1. Varqāni: see note 130, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
2. Q.31/15
3. Sultan Toḡrel: see note 131, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
4. the Prayer of Parties: *do'ā-ye aḥzāb* - the allusion is to the Battle of the Parties (or Confederates), also known as the Battle of the Ditch, which took place in the year five of the Islamic era against the Qoreyṣ and their allies. On that occasion a prayer was chanted which includes the words: "*Who alone put to flight the Confederates...*".
5. Q.17/82
6. Q.2/256
7. angels, brothers: reading *malakeyn*, *akaveyn* instead of *malekeyn*, *ākereyn* (Meier).
8. Q.22/7
9. declaration of belief in God's unity: *kalemat al-eklāṣ* - see under *klṣ* IV in E.W. Lane's Arabic-English Dictionary.
10. *raḳ'ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
11. *Fāteḥa*: the opening surah of the Qor'ān.

NOTES TO LETTERS

1. Sultan Čaḡri: see note 131, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
2. Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh: the correct form of the name is Bu Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh. See note 142, Bk. II, Chpt. 1, on Bu Moḥammad-e Joveyni.
3. Q.2/156

NOTES TO VERSES

1. *Kābarān*: the district in which Meyhana, Shaikh Abu Sa'id's home town, is located. See note 29, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.

2. Čāč: a city located in Turkistan, near present day Tashkent. The two cities mentioned are far apart, thus indicating a governmental authority of great extent.
3. Čātfar: a locality of Samarqand in Transoxania.
4. Ebrāhim: evidently refers to a reciter or singer by this name, but nothing else is known of him.
5. an Indian sword: Indian swords are traditionally esteemed for the fine quality of their blades.
6. fluent: the text is doubtful at this point.
7. Țarāz: a city of Turkistan renowned for its male and female beauties. The candle is compared to the beloved for its brilliance and straight, elongated stature.
8. Aḥmad: is another of the Prophet Moḥammad's names.
9. You kill: reading *koṣi* instead of *koni* (Šafī'i-Kadkani).
10. king Qobād: a king of Persia in pre-Islamic times, and the father of the great king Nushiravan.
11. a helpless stranger: *a'jami* - originally a term used by Arabs for "a barbarian" who doesn't speak Arabic. Here the word is used metaphorically for someone who is ignorant and helpless.
12. Now Ruz: is Persian New Year's when the sun enters Aries. It is a more grand holiday than Mehragān, an autumnal festival. Likewise, one ought not to compare the beloved's beauty to the sun, as some admirers have apparently done.
13. The text is faulty, and the reading Marv al-Rud, a city near Marv, is unmetrical.
14. The natural and spontaneous is contrasted with the artificial.

NOTES TO BOOK THREE, CHAPTER ONE.

1. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
2. a veil: the *valis* will be hidden amongst them and unrecognizable.
3. Bu Maṣṣur-e Varqāni and Sultan Toḡrel: see notes 130 and 131, Bk. II, Chpt. 1
4. Q. 2/156
5. 'this matter': *in sokaṇ* - the same as *in ḥadis*, "this affair". See note 15, Auth. Intro.
6. he passed his hand over his face: see note 70, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
7. the Jinn: see note 73, Bk. I.
8. protect: K^Vāja Ḥammuya's name is etymologically connected to the Arabic word for protection.
9. market day: *ruz(-e) bāzār* - day when there is a busy market; a metaphor for a day of great importance.
10. Day of 'Arafa and the Feast of the Sacrifice: *ruz-e 'Arafa va 'id-e azḥā* - the 9th and 10th day of *Zu'l-Ḥejja* (the 12th lunar month). On the 9th

Notes

- the pilgrims are present for ceremonies at the foot of Mt. 'Arafāt, 12 miles from Mecca. The following day the pilgrims perform sacrifices in the valley of Menā, and the feast continues for the next three days.
11. *samā'*: see note 8, Bk. I.
 12. sweeping, washing, etc.: the four compound words have a similar pattern in Persian, being formed from the past and present stem of each verb - *roft o ru'i*, *šost o šu'i*, *jost o ju'i*, *goft o gu'i*.
 13. beyond a thousand there is no reckoning: see note 23, Auth. Intro.
 14. Q.2/156
 15. *farsangs*: see note 69, Bk. I.
 16. this generous Presence: *ḥaẓrat-e bozorgvār* - "the eminent Majesty" or "Presence" refers to the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine. Ebn-e Monavvar here states that every year people come to the shrine in Meyhana. This may mean that a funerary banquet ('ors) was held annually to commemorate the Shaikh's death. See note 4, Bk. III, Chpt. 3.
 17. *satir*: a measure of weight. Forty *satir* make up one *mann*. See note 64, Bk. I, on maund.
 18. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
 19. the Ġozz: see note 16, Auth. Intro.
 20. you will not attain it: the Shaikh appears to be telling *K^Vāja* 'Abd al-Karim not to attempt to establish himself as his spiritual successor. A report like this could well have been fabricated at a later date by members of an "Abu Ṭāher party" (his descendants in particular) in order to consolidate their position as the dominant family line. The compiler has placed these words of the Shaikh just before the account in which the Shaikh is portrayed as nominating Abu Ṭāher as his successor. Throughout the *Asrār al-Towḥid* Abu Ṭāher is closely linked with the Shaikh while other of the Shaikh's children, beyond receiving a mere mention, have no role to play in the accounts.
 21. This poem also appears on p. 299. See accompanying note (note 4, Bk. II, Chpt. 2).
 22. the Pivot: *qoṭb* - At a later date the theosophical concept of the *qoṭb* came to mean the Perfect Man (*ensān-e kāmel*) who is the preserver of the universe, the Pole or Pivot around which the spheres of existence revolve. "He is the final cause of creation, i.e. the means by which God sees Himself..." (Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 86) Šafi'i-Kadkani doubts the authenticity of this report on the grounds that the term *qoṭb*, to the best of his knowledge, is first attested in Hojviri's *Kāšf al-Mahjub* which was composed towards the end of the 11th century. In any case, *qoṭb* does not here have the elaborated theosophical meaning it will eventually acquire.
 23. two *k^Vājas*: the title *k^Vāja* is here used figuratively to denote the highest spiritual rank. See note 11, Bk. II, Chpt. 2, on *k^Vājagi*

24. K^Vāja ‘Ali-ye Ḥasan: K^Vāja ‘Ali b. Ḥasan-e Kermāni was the disciple (*morīd*) of ‘Ammu (d. 1050, i.e. one year after Shaikh Abu Sa‘id) and, after ‘Ammu’s death, K^Vāja ‘Ali-ye Ḥasan appears to have presided over the kānaqāh at the sepulchral shrine of Šāh b. Šojā‘-e Kermāni in Kermān. Meier points out (p. 400) that since K^Vāja ‘Ali clearly outlived Shaikh Abu Sa‘id, the report’s use of the past tense: “The Sufis have had two k^Vājas...”, reveals that it is forged.
25. K^Vāja ‘Ali-ye Kabbāz: see the anecdote on pp. 395-398 where the Shaikh is portrayed as snubbing K^Vāja ‘Ali-ye Kabbāz. It appears rather inconsistent to represent the Shaikh here as according such a high spiritual rank to the same figure.

NOTES TO BOOK THREE, CHAPTER TWO.

1. The 5th of January, 1049.
2. The 9th of January.
3. protected: *maḥfuẓ* - just as prophets are *ma‘sum* (free of sin and error), *valis* or Friends of God are *maḥfuẓ* (watched over, protected).
4. Ahvāzi: Šafī‘i-Kadkani takes this to be the name of a chess player of renown, but no mention of him is recorded elsewhere.
5. This seems to be a way of making it clear that Ḥasan-e Mo‘addeb would have no claim to being the successor of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id. See note 20, Bk. III, Chpt. 1.
6. Q. 3/18
7. Q. 67/1
8. The same poem appears on p. 446.
9. two *beyts*: a *beyt* is a distich. In the original Arabic, the verses inscribed on the Shaikh’s tombstone consisted of a total of six distiches or couplets. They have come out longer in translation.
10. January 12th, 1049.
11. Jinn: see note 73, Bk. I.
12. arzak: a rare form of the word *arzah* - a mixture of clay and straw used for plastering.
13. Ğozz: see note 16, Auth. Intro.
14. Sultan Sanjar: see note 16, Auth. Intro., on Ğozz.
15. Kābarān: see note 29, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
16. Sultan Maḥmud: the nephew and successor of Sultan Sanjar (d. 1157), being a Saljuq on his mother’s side and a Qarāḳānīd on his father’s side. He was defeated in battle near Marv, November 1158.

NOTES TO BOOK THREE, CHAPTER THREE.

1. Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā (d. 1084): his name Dust-e Dādā is here explained as a nickname going back to his mother but Ebn al-Jowzi (*al-Montazam*, Hyderabad-Deccan, 1357-1362, 9, 11 (year 477)) gives his name as Aḥmad b. Moḥammad b. Dust, Abu Sa'd al-Neyšāburi al-Ṣufi -- Dust being his grandfather's name.
2. Ġaznin: see note 36, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
3. *ḥammām*: a bathhouse which provides hot water.
4. funerary banquet: 'ors - originally meant a wedding feast but Sufis applied the term to the funerary banquet held in honor of an important spiritual figure. The banquet included recitations (*samā'*) with music and dancing and, as mentioned on p. 543, cutting patched frocks into pieces. As is attested for shrines of holy men at a later time, the 'ors may have been held each year at the Shaikh's shrine in Meyhana in commemoration of the date of his death. See note 16, Bk. III, Chpt. 1.
5. *soffa*: see note 50, Bk. I.
6. the messenger of the pilgrims to Mecca: *sābeq al-ḥajj* - the person who precedes the pilgrims' caravan to announce their arrival at the next halting station.
7. large mill: *kar-ās* - see note 251, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
8. such a *kānaqāh*: the *kānaqāh* was known as the Rebāṭ *Ṣeyk al-Ṣoyuk*. Ebn al-Jowzi gives a more sober chronicler's account of the founding of the hospice: *al-Montazam*, see reference in note 1 of this section. Jacqueline Chabbi interprets the founding of the Rebāṭ *Ṣeyk al-Ṣoyuk* as part of the Saljuqs' political policy which aimed to diminish the caliph's authority. See her article: "La fonction du ribat à Bagdad du Ve siècle au début du VIIe siècle", *Revue des Études Islamiques* 42, 1974, pp. 101-121.
9. the Commander of the Faithful: *amir al-mo'menin* - according to the chronology, this would be the Caliph Qā'em be-amr Allāh (1031-1075).
10. Mayor of the Palace, the Chamberlain and the Keeper of the Treasury: *ostād-e sarāy* - officer in charge of the management of the caliph's palace complex; *ḥājeb al-bāb* - officer who regulates audiences with the caliph; *ṣāḥeb al-makzan* - an uncommon title for the minister in charge of finances (the *divān*).
11. Shaikh of Shaikhs of Baghdad: *ṣeyk al-Ṣoyuk-e Baġdād* - an honorific title during this period. However, by the time of Bu Sa'd's grandson, Ṣadr al-Din 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the title designated an important office. The Shaikh of Shaikhs was then responsible for supervising the Sufis of the city and was their representative before the caliph.
12. For a general discussion of this account and other sources dealing with Bu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā, see Meier, p. 369-379.

13. Bu Naṣr-e Ḥorzi and Aḥmad-e 'Adani Bāf: both these men were only born after Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's death.
14. Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
15. morsels to take home: *zalla* - victuals carried home by guests after a banquet.
16. *rebāf*: see note 71, Bk. I.
17. *farsang*: see note 69, Bk. I.
18. This poem appears earlier on p. 511.
19. Similar behavior is described in Aflāki's biography of Jelāl al-Din-e Rumi when the latter's disciples go forth to meet Šams al-Din who is returning to Konya. Aflāki, *Manāqib ul-'Ārifīn*, ed. by Tahsin Yazici, Ankara, 1959-1961, 2 vols., p. 761, 5-7. Concerning the question of direct literary influence, see Meier, p. 263, footnote.
20. Ka'ba and *qebla*: see notes 33 and 34, Auth. Intro.
21. Shaikh Ḥasan-e Jānāru: see note 60, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
22. Q. 48
23. Neẓām al-Molk: see note 9, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
24. Sultan Malekšāh (reigned 1072-1092): under Malekšāh the Saljuq Empire reached its height and included most of western Asia, extending from Ṭokārestān in the east to the frontiers of the Byzantine Empire in Asia Minor and the Fāṭemid Caliphate of Egypt.
25. 'Alavi: see note 99, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
26. sultan: not Sultan Malekšāh but the sultan in Ġaznin, as is indicated a few paragraphs later.
27. a proof against one: *hojja*t - a proof to be advanced against one in the hereafter that one's shortcomings are not to be explained by ignorance.
28. Pivot: see note 22, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
29. the year 480: 1087. But 'Abd al-Ġāfer al-Fāresi (d. 1134), in his biographical dictionary (*al-Siyāq le-ta'rik Neyšābur*), gives 479/1086 as the year of Abu Ṭāher's death. See *The Histories of Nishapur*, ed. by Richard Frye, Den Haag 1965, Harvard Oriental Series, 45.
30. *rebāfs*: see note 71, Bk. I.
31. behind the Shaikh: with relation to the *qebla* (direction of Mecca).
32. Shaikh Bu'l-Faẓl-e Šāmi: Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Kottali (? *Katli*) acquired his *nesbat* Šāmi (the Syrian) because of his long retreat on Mt. Lokkān (see note 54, Instr. Points) in Syria. He was the *pir* of Ostād 'Ali b. 'Osmān-e Hojviri, author of the *Kašf al-Maḥjub*.
33. two *rak'ats* of prayer: see note 70, Bk. I.
34. 'this affair': see note 15, Auth. Intro.
35. the Sufis: 'azizān - "the dear ones" means the Sufis. See note 6, Bk. I.
36. Sultan Sanjar: see note 16, Auth. Intro., on Ġozz.
37. Jinn: see note 73, Bk. I.
38. Qor'ānic fascicles: *si pāra* - one of thirty separate fascicles making up a complete Qor'ān, as opposed to a *jāme'-e Qor'ān*, a complete text in one volume.

Notes

39. Monavvar is an illuminated one: there is a pun here on his name which means illuminated.
40. **K^Vāja** Imam Fakr al-Din Abu'l-Faḥ: this person is not mentioned in other sources (Šaff'i-Kadkani).
41. the month of Šavvāl, 590: 1194 (Šavvāl falls between Sept. and Oct.). This date would appear to be somewhat later than the composition of the *Asrār al-Towḥid*. The account is no doubt an interpolation and is not found in any of the MSS except A which Šaff'i-Kadkani has taken as the basis of his edition.
42. Tāj al-Eslām Abu Sa'd b. Moḥammad al-Sam'āni (d. 1166): a great scholar of Marv who traveled extensively in quest of religious learning. The titles of forty-nine of his works are preserved including a history of his home city Marv. His *Ketāb al-Ansāb* in Arabic is a particularly valuable dictionary of *nesbats*, with their origins and correct forms carefully explained. As for the authenticity of the present account, Sam'āni was not yet born at the time that his father made the pilgrimage to Mecca and was only four years old when his father died.
43. 'Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari (d. between 1136 and 1145): had been a religious scholar and jurist before settling in Mecca and devoting himself to an ascetic life.
44. **K^Vāja** Bu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri: see note 59, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
45. the Sacred Mosque: *masjed-e ḥarām* - In the year 8 of the *hejra* the Prophet Moḥammad made the sanctuary at Mecca, which contained the Ka'ba, the spring of Zemzem and the Maqām-e Ebrāhim, into a mosque for Muslim worship. According to the Qor'ān (22/26) the sacredness of the Sacred Mosque is based on a revelation of God to Abraham, telling him to purify the site for worship.
46. the Chief: the Prophet Moḥammad who is buried in Medina.
47. Moṣṭafā: the Prophet Moḥammad. See note 7, Auth. Intro.
48. **Keẓr**: see note 66, Bk. I.
49. the road of Miqāt-e 'Omra: the *miqāt* is the appointed place where pilgrims put on the *eḥrām* (pilgrim's garb), in this case before undertaking the minor pilgrimage ('Omra). The Mosque of 'Āyeša is close to the *miqāt*. See *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. by R.J.C. Broadhurst, London 1952, p. 109.
50. the eminent **K^Vāja** Imam of Bokhara: *k^Vāja emām-e kabir-e Bokāri* - is a string of titles. The name of the person intended is not specified.
51. the illustrious military commander: *amir-e ajall* - the person referred to by this title is unknown.
52. *madrasa*: school or college where religious and philological sciences were taught. See George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges, Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, Edinburgh University Press, 1981.

53. Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥaddād (d. before 1117): a preacher, man of letters, grammarian and jurist who resided in Esfarāyen.
54. Shaikh's Majesty: the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine.
55. *raḳ'ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
56. Bābu Fala (or Fala-yi): Aḥmad b. Moḥammad-e Fali/Fala-yi (d. 1068) was a disciple of Bu'l-Faḫr-e Ḥasan (Shaikh Abu Sa'īd's *pir*) and his successor in the *kānaqāh* in Saraks.
57. Ostād Imam Bu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri: see note 19, Bk. II, Chpt. 1.
58. Moṣṭafā: the Prophet Moḥammad. See note 7, Auth. Intro.
59. K^vāja Emām-e Ajall Ṣāḥib al-Dīn Aṣḥad-e (sic) Qoṣeyri: Abu'l-Aṣḥad Hebat al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd al-Vāḥed-e Qoṣeyri (d. 1153 or 1155) was the last outstanding personality of the Qoṣeyri family and held the office of Chief Preacher (*kaṭīb*) of Nishapur.
60. the army's encampment: he intends to ask the sultan, who resides in the army camp, for financial assistance.
61. *dāng*: see note 76, Bk. I.
62. properties: *mostaḡall* - a property which brings in an income.
63. K^vāja Abu'l-Ma'ālī-ye Qoṣeyri: Abu'l-Ma'ālī 'Abd al-Karīm b. 'Obeydollāh, the grandson of Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri, was famous for his preaching in the New Congregational Mosque (Jāme'-e Jadīd) of Nishapur. He was assassinated by Shiites (*ravāfeẓ*) in 1163.
64. Imam Abu Naṣr-e Qoṣeyri (d. 1120): Abu Naṣr 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. 'Abd al-Karīm was Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri's eldest and closest son. He studied Ṣāf'ī law and Aṣḥari theology under Emām al-Ḥaramayn-e Joveyni. In 1077 a class was convened for him in Baghdad but in expounding his Aṣḥari views, he upset the Ḥanbalites who were the dominant *mazḥab* in the city. Rioting broke out and Abu Naṣr was summoned to Isfahan by Neẓām al-Molk where he was received with honors but admonished by the vezier. See Bulliet, *Patricians*, p. 155.
65. Imam Bu Sa'īd-e Qoṣeyri: Abu Sa'īd Rokn al-Eslām 'Abd al-Vāḥed b. 'Abd al-Karīm (d. 1102) was Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri's second son. He dictated Traditions of the Prophet in the Neẓāmiya Madrasa in Nishapur. He succeeded to the office of Chief Preacher (*kaṭīb*) in the Manī'ī Congregational Mosque in Nishapur after Emām al-Ḥaramayn-e Joveyni. See anecdote on pp. 157-158 about Imam Bu Sa'īd's *konyat* allegedly being given him by Shaikh Abu Sa'īd.
66. Faḳr al-Eslām Abu'l-Qāsem-e Joveyni: Abu'l-Qāsem Moẓaffar b. 'Abd al-Malek-e Joveyni, the son of Emām al-Ḥaramayn-e Joveyni, was renowned for learning like his father. He also practiced swordsmanship and archery. He was poisoned to death in 1100, as a result of his having criticized an important "sultan", probably the 'amid of Khorasan Moḥammad b. Moḥammad b. Maṣṣūr.

Notes

67. Joneyd: an insult based on disrespect towards one of the greatest Sufi figures (see note 55, Bk. I).
68. lifted its leg: the anecdote confuses a dog's way of urinating with that of a cat's.
69. slap on the back of the neck: a metaphor for reprimanding someone.
70. Apparently the account wishes to show that K^Vāja Nāṣer was wrong to consult with a doctor. It is implied that had he trusted in the wonder working powers (*barakāt*) of the shrine at Meyhana, he would have recovered from his illness.
71. *samāʿ*: see note 8, Bk. I.
72. the *mowṣeli* and *arḡanun* melodies: Eshāq b. Ebrāhim-e Mowṣeli (d. 849) was an Iranian master musician whose name became proverbial. *Arḡanun*, besides being a musical instrument, also designates a kind of melody. See Šaffi-Kadkani's note on p. 638 of his edition of the text.
73. the infidels of Keṭā: the Qara-Khitai were a Turkic people moving into Transoxania by this time from the east and pressing the Ġozz. Sultan Sanjar (see note 16, Auth. Intro., on Ġozz) was defeated at Qatvān, a village near Samarqand, in 1141 in an attempt to check their growing power.
74. K^Vārazmšāh Atsez (d. 1155): ruler of K^Vārazm, the delta region south of the Aral Sea. Atsez took advantage of Sultan Sanjar's weakness after the latter's defeat in the Battle of Qatvān, and invaded Khorasan, plundering Marv and Nishapur.
75. Kābarān: see note 29, Bk. II, Chpt. 2.
76. *farsang*: see note 69, Bk. I.
77. K^Vāja-ye 'Erāq al-Šābandi: the text is defective. For a discussion of the person's possible identity see the index of personal names, p. 704, in Šaffi-Kadkani's edition of the text.
78. his officers in charge of leading the army: *čāvošān* - the persons who went ahead of the army and chose the terrain where the army would set up camp.
79. Jamāl al-Din Bu Rowḥ: see note 25, Auth. Intro.
80. *qebḷa*: see note 34, Auth. Intro.
81. the Ġozz: see note 16, Auth. Intro.
82. 'the white nights': *šab-hā-ye biṣ* - the 13th, 14th and 15th days from the new moon, which are the brightest at night.
83. Q.48 This is the same surah the Shaikh made his eldest son, Abu Ṭāher, learn by heart. See the anecdote on pp. 552-556.
84. *rak'ats*: see note 70, Bk. I.
85. the Ġozz: see note 16, Auth. Intro.
86. the possessor of clairvoyance... one *dāng* out of every ten dinars: *šāḥeb-e ešrāf* - has a double meaning: a person endowed with clairvoyance and an officer (in the *divān-e ešrāf*) who has the oversight of the collection of taxes; and *velāyat* can mean an administrative pro-

vince or the spiritual rank of *vali*, the Friend of God. Consequently, the sense is that just as the tax auditor (*ṣāḥib-e eṣrāf*) receives a fee which is only one *dāng* per ten dinars of the revenues collected in a province (*velāyat*), the possessor of clairvoyance (*ṣāḥib-e eṣrāf*) only enjoys a fraction of the spiritual privileges (*velāyat*) of the *vali*. A *dāng* is a sixth of a dinar.

87. lofty Majesty... elevated Threshold: both terms refer to the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine in Meyhana.
88. Majesty: refers, as above, to the Shaikh's sepulchral shrine.
89. on Monday of the blessed month of Ramazān, in the year seven hundred and one: presumably the first Monday of the month, i.e. May 1st, 1301.

INDEX OF NAMES

PERSONS

Aaron (Hārūn, brother of Moses) 463
 ‘Abd al-Jalil: Rašid al-Ṭāyefa
 ‘Abd al-Karim-e Azjāhi 524
 ‘Abd al-Karim (K^vāja) 270, 292, 315, 320, 529, 531, 534
 ‘Abd al-Malek b. Šādān 277
 ‘Abd al-Malek-e Ṭabari 563-565
 ‘Abd al-Raḥim-e Azjāhi 354
 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi Šāleḥ (Qor’ānic reciter) 186, 424, 456
 ‘Abd al-Razzāq: Šan’āni
 ‘Abd al-Šamad (Shaikh) 99, 100
 ‘Abd al-Šamad b. Ḥasan al-Qalānesi 193
 ‘Abd al-Šamad b. Moḥammad al-Šufi al-Saraksi 285, 286
 ‘Abdollah-e Anšāri 347
 ‘Abdollah b. al-Faraj al-‘Ābed 372
 ‘Abdollah b. Mobārak 268, 269, 358, 387
 ‘Abdollah b. ‘Omar 397
 Abivardi: Abu'l-Ḥasan
 Abivardi: Ḥakim b. Moḥammad
 Abraham (Ebrāhim the prophet) 288, 452, 501, 551
 Abu'l-‘Abbās-e Qaššāb 107, 117, 118, 122-124, 310, 379, 424, 425, 451
 Abu'l-‘Abbās-e Rikā’i 344, 345
 Abu'l-‘Abbās-e Šaqqāni 329
 Abu ‘Abdollah-e Bāku 165-168, 318-320

Abu ‘Abdollah-e Dāstāni 124
 Abu ‘Abdollah-e Kezri 82, 86
 Abu ‘Abdollah-e Karrām 177, 218
 Abu ‘Abdollah-e Rāzi 367
 Abu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami 100, 112, 220, 318, 388, 484
 Abu Aḥmad (Ostād) 134, 135, 279
 Abu'l-‘Alā’ Nāšer b. Fazlollah 526, 569
 Abu ‘Ali (the carpenter) 298
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Daqqāq 110, 126, 127, 161, 377, 378, 381, 400, 421
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Faqih 87, 89, 90, 221, 397, 399
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Fārmadi 208, 210, 211, 282, 287
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Kuji 108, 109
 Abu ‘Ali-ye ‘Orzi (Amir Sayyed) 134, 135
 Abu ‘Ali-ye ‘Osmāni 353
 Abu ‘Ali al-Moṭahhar b. Fazlollah 526
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Šabbu’i: Šabbu’i, Abu ‘Ali
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Senji 87
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Sinā (Avicenna) 300-302
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Siyāh 268, 269, 358
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Ṭarsusi 138, 405
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Toršizi 163, 164
 Abu ‘Ali-ye Ṭusi: Abu ‘Ali-ye Fārmadi
 Abu ‘Ali Zāher b. Aḥmad al-Faqih: Abu ‘Ali-ye Faqih
 Abu ‘Amr (the son-in-law of Ostād Imam Qošeyri) 158
 Abu ‘Amr-e Boškevāni 85, 251-254

Abu 'Amr Forāti 87
 Abu 'Amr-e Ḥasku 181, 182, 271, 273
 Abu 'Amr b. Nojeyd-e Solami 388
 Abu 'Aṣem-e 'Eyāzi 294
 Abu'l-Badr-e Mošreqi (Imam) 552
 Abu Bakr (the four of Nishapur) 324
 Abu Bakr (Ostād) 247, 299
 Abu Bakr-e 'Abdollāh (-e Nassāj) 284
 Abu Bakr-e Daruni 442
 Abu Bakr Eshāq-e Karrāmi 146, 148-151, 326
 Abu Bakr-e Hira (Qāzi) 324, 325
 Abu Bakr-e Jānāru 159
 Abu Bakr-e Jowzaqi 383
 Abu Bakr-e Karrāmi: see Abu Bakr Eshāq-e Karrāmi
 Abu Bakr-e Kaṭib 174-176, 508
 Abu Bakr-e Kattāni 376, 377
 Abu Bakr-e Mo'addeb 158, 250, 270, 273, 405, 415, 416, 493
 Abu Bakr Moḥammad b. Aḥmad-e Vā'eẓ-e Sarksi 192, 570
 Abu Bakr-e Mokarram 213
 Abu Bakr-e Nowqāni 291
 Abu Bakr-e Qaffāl-e Marvazi 87, 174
 Abu Bakr-e Šābuni 305, 306
 Abu Bakr-e Šebli 100, 353, 366, 368, 369, 371, 393, 395, 396
 Abu Bakr-e Šeddiq 386, 486
 Abu Bakr-e Šowkāni 207
 Abu Bakr-e Vāseṭi 309, 395
 Abu'l-Baqā' al-Mofazzal b. Fazlollāh 526

Abu'l-Barakāt 191, 442, 502
 Abu'l-Darāvardi 84
 Abu'l-Dardā' 309
 Abu Eshāq-e Esfarāyeni 387
 Abu'l-'Ezz al-Movaffaq b. Sa'id 526
 Abu'l-Fakr b. Mofazzal 577
 Abu'l-Faraj al-Faẓl b. Aḥmad al-'Āmeri 526
 Abu'l-Faṭḥ (K^vāja, Ṭāher b. Sa'id) 172, 213, 228, 242-244, 265, 267, 270, 311, 324, 330-333, 351, 359, 360, 405, 526, 529, 552
 Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Abi Bakr b. Maṣṣur al-Qāzi al-Meyhani (Fakr al-Din) 562
 Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. 'Ali al-Ḥaddād 566, 567
 Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Sām 70
 Abu'l-Faẓl-e Forāti 348, 349
 Abu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan-e Sarak̄si 89-92, 99-101, 107, 113, 128, 129, 273, 313, 340, 341, 392, 396, 484, 566
 Abu'l-Faẓl Moḥammad b. Aḥmad-e 'Āref-e Nowqāni 247, 420, 502
 Abu'l-Faẓl-e Šāmi 558, 559
 Abu'l-Fotuḥ 'Abbās (K^vāja Imam) 173
 Abu'l-Fotuḥ-e 'Eyāzi 219
 Abu'l-Fotuḥ-e Ġazāyeri 159, 161, 563
 Abu'l-Fotuḥ Mas'ud b. Faẓl al-'Āmeri 526, 548
 Abu Ḥafṣ-e Ḥaddād 386
 Abu Ḥāmed-e Dustān 390
 Abu Ḥamza-ye Nuri 392
 Abu Ḥanifa 83, 84, 147

Index

- Abu'l-Ḥasan (custodian of Pir
 Bu'l-Faḡl-e Ḥasan's *kānaqāh*
 in Saraks) 273
 Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Ali b. al-Moṣannā
 396
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e A'raj-e Abivardi
 526
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Bāruzi 441
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e *Karaqāni* 118,
 120, 124, 229, 230-233, 237,
 239, 240-242, 333, 334, 387,
 458
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Māleki 578
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Nuri 361, 362,
 393
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Pušanji 367
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Rowqi 298
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Sanjāri 220
 Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Tuni 177, 179
 Abu Horeyra 377
 Abu Ja'far (merchant in
 Nishapur, "my Bu Ja'far")
 179, 180
 Abu Ja'far-e Qāyeni 373
 Abu Jahl 187
 Abu'l-*Keyr*: Bābu Bu'l-*Keyr*
 Abu Labāba-ye Meyhani 87
 Abu Lahab 187
 Abu'l-Ma'āli-ye Joveyni: Emām
 al-Ḥarameyn
 Abu'l-Ma'āli-ye Qoṣeyri 568
 Abu Maṣṣur-e Varqāni 204,
 205, 497, 498, 522
 Abu Moḥammad 'Abdollāh b.
 Moḥammad al-Morta'eš
 91, 380
 Abu Moḥammad-e 'Annāzi
 77, 523
 Abu Moḥammad-e Joreyri 122
 Abu Moḥammad-e Joveyni
 87, 211, 224, 225, 245, 310,
 326, 333, 343, 344, 409, 411
 Abu Moḥammad Nāṣeḥ al-Din
 564
 Abu Moslem-e Fāresi 220
 Musā (Pir): Musā (Pir)
 Abu Naṣr (Shaikh) 228
 Abu Naṣr-e 'Eyāzi 211, 294
 Abu Naṣr-e Ḥorzi 154, 548
 Abu Naṣr-e Qoṣeyri 568
 Abu Naṣr-e Sarrāj-e Ṭusi (the
 Peacock of the Poor) 91,
 134
 Abu Naṣr-e Šervāni 225-227
 Abu 'Oṣmān-e Ḥiri 112, 191,
 192
 Abu 'Oṣmān-e Maḡrebi 395
 Abu'l-Qāsem (the son of Abu'l-
 Ḥasan-e *Karaqāni*) 229,
 230, 233
 Abu'l-Qāsem Bešr-e Yāsin 77-
 81, 312, 465, 482, 483, 485
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Ḥakim 267, 268
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Hāšemi (*K^vāja*)
 135, 136
 Abu'l-Qāsem Joneyd b. 'Ali al-
 Šarmaqāni 94,
 Abu'l-Qāsem Joneyd b.
 Moḥammad-e Baḡdādi:
 Joneyd
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Joveyni, Fakr
 al-Eslām 568, 569
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Korrakāni 137,
 210, 211, 282, 284
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Naṣrābādi 100
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri (Ostād
 Imam) 139, 154-166, 169,
 170, 191, 204, 205, 208, 311,
 314, 315, 320, 326, 328, 343,
 352, 355, 387, 409, 423, 549,
 550, 567
 Abu'l-Qāsem-e Rubāhi 191,
 548, 550

- Abu'l-Qāsem-e Zarrād-e Balziri 254
 Abu'l-Qāsemak (Hājeb) 150, 151
 Abu Rowḥ: Jamāl al-Din
 Abu Sa'd Dust-e Dādā 532, 539-542, 545-547
 Abu Sa'd b. Moḥammad-e Sam'āni (Tāj al-Eslām) 563, 564
 Abu Sa'd Šeyk al-Eslām 63, 124, 135, 187, 249, 258, 312, 522, 526, 560
 Abu Sahl-e Šo'luḳi 388
 Abu Sa'id-e 'Annāzi 79, 80
 Abu Sa'id Faẓlollāh b. Abi'l-Keyr-e Meyhani (the Shaikh): *passim*
 Abu Sa'id-e Haddād 341, 342
 Abu Sa'id-e Kaššāb 171
 Abu Sa'id-e Qošeysi 157, 568, 569
 Abu Šāleḥ-e Dandāni 202
 Abu Šāleḥ (reciter) 415, 416
 Abu Ṭāher Sa'id b. Faẓlollāh 63, 102, 112, 128, 135, 153, 163, 164, 228, 234, 236, 243, 244, 249-251, 258, 259, 321, 322, 323, 350, 359, 360, 497, 499, 506, 526, 529, 530, 532, 534, 543, 548, 552-558
 Abu Ṭāleb (paternal uncle of the Prophet) 464
 Abu Ṭāleb-e Ja'fari 266
 Abu'l-Vafā' al-Mozaffar b. Faẓlollāh 231, 526
 Abu Ya'qub-e Nahrajuri 393
 Abu Yazid: Bāyazid
 Abu Yusof (Qāzi) 374
 Adam (Ādam) 61, 62, 126, 185, 188, 464, 469, 551
 Aḥmad (Prophet Moḥammad) 515
 Aḥmad (disciple of Abu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan-e Sarakṣi) 100
 Aḥmad (Pir) 157
 Aḥmad-e 'Adani Bāf 548
 Aḥmad-e 'Ali-ye Nasavi: Moḥammad-e 'Olyān-e Nasavi
 Aḥmad Bābu Fala: Bābu Fala
 Aḥmad-e Bu Leyṣ 422
 Aḥmad-e Bu Šarah 332
 Aḥmad-e Dehestāni (the 'amid of Khorasan) 172
 Aḥmad-e Fala-yi: Bābu Fala
 Aḥmad-e Ḥammuya: Ḥammuya
 Aḥmad-e Maḥmud (the Sufi) 570
 Aḥmad-e Mālekān-e Šowkāni 276
 Aḥmad-e Najjār 108
 Aḥmad-e Nasavi: Aḥmad-e 'Ali: Moḥammad-e 'Olyān-e Nasavi
 Aḥmad-e Naṣr 110, 111, 423
 Aḥmad-e Ṭābarāni: Aḥmad-e Ṭāyarāni
 Aḥmad-e Ṭāyarāni 420, 421
 Aḥmadak (beloved) 383, 384
 Ahvāzi 532
 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb 91, 100, 101, 122, 249, 353, 371, 374 399, 408
 'Ali-ye Ḥasan-e Kermāni (K^vāja) 530
 'Ali b. Ḥoseyn: Zeyn al-'Ābedin
 'Ali-ye Kabbāz (K^vāja) 268, 269 358, 422, 423, 530
 'Ali-ye Moḥtaseb 549, 550

Index

- ‘Ali-ye Şandali: Şandali, ‘Ali
 ‘Ali-ye Tarsusi (Shaikh Abu Sa‘id's father-in-law) 330
 ‘Aliyak-e Dar-e ‘Azra 203, 204, 264, 531, 534
 ‘Āmeri: Abu'l-Faraj al-Faḡl b. Aḥmad
 ‘amid of Khorasan: Aḥmad-e Dehestāni
 ‘amid of Khorasan: Ḥāḡeb Moḥammad
 Amira (miller) 265
 ‘Ammā (the Shaikh's sister) 412, 413
 ‘Amr (Jenni) 525
 ‘Annāzi: Abu Moḥammad
 ‘Annāzi: Abu Sa‘id
 Anşāri: ‘Abdollāh-e Anşāri
 ‘Aqab (Jenni) 525
 Aşraf Abu'l-Yamān 288, 547, 552
 Atsez, K̲v̲ārazmşāh 570, 572
 Awḡad al-Ṭāyefa: Moḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Eslām
 ‘Āyeşa-ye Şeddiqa 401
 ‘Azza (the beloved of Koşayyer) 446, 533
 Bābā Ḥasan (prayer leader): Ḥasan, Bābā
 Bābu Bu'l-Ḳeyr 75-78, 81, 115, 465
 Bābu Fala 566, 567
 Baḡr (Jenni) 525
 Barā’ b. ‘Āzeb 495
 Baştāmi: Bāyazid
 Bāyazid-e Baştāmi 83, 233, 365, 381, 382, 421, 435
 Belāl (the Abyssinian) 184
 Beşr-e Ḥāfi (the Barefoot) 85
 Bibi Şarrāf 388
 Bibiyak Sayyār 391
 Boḡrā Kān 174
 Bokāri 377
 Bu: Look up names beginning with Bu under Abu.
 Čaḡri 255, 257, 505
 Dād (Pir) 360, 361
 Dādā (the cook) 539
 Dāneşmand-e Dustān 382
 Dāstāni: Abu ‘Abdollāh
 Daruni: Abu Bakr-e Daruni
 David (Dā‘ud the prophet) 362, 376, 398, 435
 Dā‘ud-e Ṭā‘i 91, 122, 399
 Dehestāni: Aḥmad-e Dehestāni
 Dog of Byzantium (Kalb al-Rum) 391
 Dust-e Dādā: Abu Sa‘d Dust-e Dādā
 Eblis: Satan
 Ebn-e Soreyj 82
 Ebrāhim (Abraham the prophet)
 Ebrāhim (reciter-*qavvāl*) 513
 Ebrāhim (Seyf al-Dowla): Ebrāhim Ināl
 Ebrāhim-e Adham 301
 Ebrāhim Ināl 205, 206, 351-353
 Edris 94, 256
 ‘Emād al-Din Moḥammad Bu'l-‘Abbās-e Sadid 289, 290, 291
 Emām al-Ḥarameyn-e Joveyni: Abu'l-Ma‘āli-ye Joveyni 160, 168, 326, 344, 568
 ‘Emrān 260-263
 Esmā‘il (the son of Abraham): Ishmael
 Esmā‘il-e ‘Abbās 191, 502
 Esmā‘il-e Mokarram 214
 Esmā‘il-e Şābuni 211, 221, 222, 245, 311, 326, 343, 408
 Esmā‘il-e Sāvi 515
 Esmā‘il-e Sayyāri 222

- Esmā'ilak-e Daqqāq 162, 163
 Eve (Havvā) 62
 'Eyāzi: Abu 'Āšem
 'Eyāzi: Abu'l-Faṭḥ
 'Eyāzi: Abu Naṣr
 'Ezz al-Din Maḥmud-e Ilbāši-ye Ṭusi 134, 354
 Fakr al-Din-e Meyhani-ye Sarakhsi: Abu 'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Abi Bakr
 Fakr al-Eslām-e Joveyni: Abu'l-Qāsem
 Fāresi: Abu Moslem-e Fāresi
 Fārmadi: Abu 'Ali-ye Fārmadi
 Fāṭema (daughter of Abu 'Ali-ye Daqqāq and wife of Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri) 161
 Fāṭema (daughter of Abu Ṭāher b. Abi Sa'id) 321
 Fāṭema the Splendid (al-Zahrā') 407
 Forāti: Abu 'Amr
 Forāti: Abu'l-Faṣl
 the four Abu Bakrs: Abu Bakr Gabriel (Jebrā'il) 463, 489
 Ġazāyeri: Abu'l-Fotuḥ
 Ġenādusti: Ḥoseyn Ġenādusti
 Ḥabib-e 'Ajami 91, 122
 Ḥājeb Moḥammad 170-172
 Ḥakim b. Moḥammad al-Abivardi 565
 Ḥallāj: Ḥoseyn-e Maṣṣur
 Hāmān 319
 Hammuya (K^vāja) 251, 258, 259, 289, 291, 335, 505, 524, 535
 Ḥamza (Sayyed) 317
 Ḥamza-ye Azjāhi (the knife maker) 279, 280, 339, 340
 Ḥamza al-Turāb (the Dust) 311
 Ḥasan, Bābā (the Shaikh's prayer leader) 314
 Ḥasan-e Baṣri (of Basra) 91, 122, 482
 Ḥasan-e Jānāru 552
 Ḥasan-e Mo'addeb 140, 141, 146, 147, 149, 151, 162, 163, 171, 173, 176-183, 189, 193-195, 197-199, 201, 203, 204, 206, 207, 212, 219, 226, 228, 232, 234, 235, 237, 238, 240, 251, 256, 257, 270-273, 284, 285, 287, 292-294, 297, 300, 302-304, 323, 329, 335, 348, 349, 404, 409, 410, 498, 509, 524, 531, 540, 542
 Ḥasan: Nezām al-Molk
 Ḥasan-e Samarqandi 290
 Ḥasan: Sayyed-e Ajall
 Hāšemi: Abu'l-Qāsem-e Hāšemi
 Hobbi (Pir) 320
 Ḥomeyd-e Zanjuya 87
 Ḥorzi: Abu Naṣr-e Ḥorzi
 Ḥoseyn (qāzi from Marv al-Rud) 357, 358, 506
 Ḥoseyn b. 'Ali 100
 Ḥoseyn-e Ġenādusti 219
 Ḥoseyn-e Maṣṣur-e Ḥallāj 151
 Ḥoṣri (Shaikh) 82
 Ishmael (son of Abraham) 488
 Iṣi-ye Nili 152-154
 Jāber b. 'Abdollāh 467
 Jacob (Ya'qub the prophet) 551
 Ja'far b. Moḥammad-e Ṣādeq 83, 100, 490, 491
 Jamāl al-Din Abu Rowḥ 67, 571
 Jamšid 319
 Jesus ('Isā) 125, 178, 551
 John (the Baptist) 125
 Joneyd 91, 100, 122, 353, 366, 368, 374, 376, 380, 388
 Joseph (Yusof the prophet) 229, 233

Index

- Joveyni: Abu'l-Ma'āli
 Joveyni: Abu Moḥammad
 Joveyni: Abu'l-Qāsem-e
 Joveyni: Moḥammad b.
 'Abdollāh b. Yusof
 Ka'b al-Aḥbār 365
 Kadija (the Prophet's first wife)
 464
 Kālu 345
 Kamāl al-Din Abu Sa'id (Ebn-e
 Monavvar's uncle) 135
 Karaqāni: Abu'l-Ḥasan
 Karrāmi: Abu Bakr Eshāq-e
 Karrāmi
 Kaṭib-e Kufi 406
 Kattāni: Abu Bakr-e Kattāni
 Keẓr 94, 377, 413, 424, 563
 Korrakāni: Abu'l-Qasem-e
 Korrakāni
 Koṣayyer (the Arabic poet) 533
 Kosrow 239
 K^Vāja-ye Najjār: Najjār
 K^Vājagak-e Sangāni: Sangāni
 K^Vārazmšāh: Atsez
 Loqmān-e Sarakṣi 87, 88, 92,
 113, 306, 340, 341, 340, 341,
 400
 Maḡrebi: Abu 'Oṣmān
 Māhak (daughter of K^Vāja
 Hammuya): Moon
 Mahdi-ye Pāruzi 560-562
 Maḥmud (Ġaznavid sultan)
 77, 384, 392
 Maḥmud (Saljuq sultan) 538
 Maḥmud-e Ilbāši: 'Ezz al-Din
 Maḥmud
 Maḥmud-e Morid 137, 138
 Mālek b. Anas 84
 Mālekān, Imam 288
 Mālekān-e Šowkāni: Aḥmad-e
 Mālekān
 Māleki: Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Māleki
 Malekšāh 536, 554
 Ma'mar 377
 Māmān (the coppersmith) 531
 Ma'ruf-e Karkī 100, 122,
 Marvazi: Abu Bakr
 Marvazi: Nāṣer
 Mary (Maryam) 125, 178
 Maṣ'ad-e Nowqāni 419, 420
 Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malek
 398
 Maṣ'ud-e Banjar (Amir) 284,
 285
 Maṣ'ud-e Ġaznavi (sultan) 255-
 257
 Ma'ṣuq-e Ṭusi 133, 134
 Mo'āviya b. Abi Sofyān 368
 Mo'āz b. Jabal 445
 Mofazzal: Abu'l-Baqā' al-
 Mofazzal b. Fazlollāh 307,
 308
 Moḥammad: the Prophet of
 God: Moṣṭafā: Aḥmad:
 passim
 Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh-e
 Ṭabari 122
 Moḥammad b. 'Abdollāh b.
 Yusof al-Joveyni 507
 Moḥammad b. 'Abd al-Salām,
 Owḥad al-Ṭāyefa 573
 Moḥammad b. Aḥmad-e 'Āref:
 Moḥammad-e 'Āref
 Moḥammad-e 'Alavi: Sayyed
 Moḥammad
 Moḥammad b. 'Ali al-Ḥaddād:
 Abu'l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad
 Moḥammad b. 'Ali al-Nasavi:
 Aḥmad-e 'Ali:
 Moḥammad-e 'Olyān-e
 Nasavi
 Moḥammad b. 'Ali al-Qaṣṣāb
 395

Moḥammad, Amir Sayyed
(custodian of Neẓām al-
Molk's *kānaqāh* in Isfahan)
280, 281 283
Moḥammad, the Gnostic of
Nowqān (ʿĀref-e
Nowqāni): Abu'l-Faẓl
Moḥammad b. Aḥmad
Moḥammad-e Bāqer 100
Moḥammad-e Bu Eshāq 547
Moḥammad-e Bu Naṣr-e
Ḥabibi 174, 176
Moḥammad-e Faẓl 108
Moḥammad b. Kašnām 372
Moḥammad-e Kuhiyān 320
Moḥammad b. Monavvar
(author/compiler) 63
Moḥammad-e ʿOlyān-e Nasavi
112, 113
Moḥammad-e Qāyeni 342
Moḥammad Šāh b. Aḡlabak b.
Eybak 580
Moḥammad b. Sām: Abu'l-Faṭḥ
Moḥammad-e Samʿāni 564,
565
Moḥammad-e Šowkāni (Pir)
141
Moḥammad-e Šowkāni (jurist)
207
Moḥammad-e Šowkāni (K^vāja)
276, 277
Moon (Māhak, daughter of
K^vāja Ḥammuya) 289
Monavvar b. Abi Saʿd 577
Morid: Maḥmud-e Morid
Morid: Shaikh Morid
Mortaʿeš: Abu Moḥammad
ʿAbdollāh b. Moḥammad
Mosabbeḥ-e Naqib 199, 201
Moses (Musā) 394, 463, 515,
551

Mošreqi: Abu'l-Badr
Moštafā: the Prophet
Moḥammad: *passim*
Moṭahhar: Abu ʿAli al-
Moṭahhar b. Faẓlollāh
Movaffaq: Abu'l-ʿEzz al-
Movaffaq b. Saʿid
Moẓaffar: Abu'l-Vafāʾ al-
Moẓaffar b. Faẓlollāh
Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān 116, 203,
204, 298, 419, 420
Moẓaffar-e Samʿāni 564
Mozani 82
Musā (Pir) 213
Nahrajuri: Abu Yaʿqub-e
Nahrajuri
Najjār (K^vāja-ye) 320, 525, 535
Nasavi: Moḥammad-e ʿOlyān
Nāṣeḥ al-Din Bu Moḥammad:
Abu Moḥammad Nāṣeḥ al-
Din
Nāṣer: Abu'l-ʿAlāʾ Nāṣer b.
Faẓlollāh
Nāṣer-e Marvazi 87
Naṣrābādi: Abu'l-Qāsem
Neẓām al-Molk, Ḥasan 135,
173, 279, 280, 281-283, 554-
556
Nimrod (Namrud) 319, 452
Nowqāni: Abu Bakr
Nowqāni: Abu'l-Faẓl
Moḥammad b. Aḥmad
Nowqāni: Maṣʿad
Nowqāni: Moẓaffar-e Ḥamdān
Nur al-Din Monavvar (Ebn-e
Monavvar's father) 270,
334, 528, 560, 562
Nuri: Abu Ḥamza
Nuri: Abu'l-Ḥasan
ʿOmar b. al-Kaṭṭāb 365, 391,
472

Index

- 'Omar-e Šowkāni, Zeyn al-
 Ṭāyefa 141, 161, 276, 277,
 279, 548
 'Omāra (the poet) 405
 'Oqba b. 'Āmer 313
 Ostād Abu Bakr: Abu Bakr-e
 Nowqāni
 Ostād Imam: Abu'l-Qāsem-e
 Qošeysi
 'Otbi 398
 Oveys-e Qarani 393
 Owḥad al-Ṭāyefa: Moḥammad
 b. 'Abd al-Salām
 Pearl (Gowhar) 346
 Pharaoh (Fer'own) 319
 Qaffāl: Abu Bakr-e Qaffāl
 Qalānesi: 'Abd al-Šamad
 Qāyeni: Abu Ja'far
 Qāyeni: Moḥammad
 Qobād (pre-Islamic Iranian
 king) 516
 Qoteyba 557, 558
 Qošeysi: Abu Našr
 Qošeysi: Abu'l-Qāsem
 Qošeysi: Abu Sa'id
 Qošeysi: Zahir al-Din
 Rābe'a 400
 Rāḥati 419, 420
 Rašid al-Ṭāyefa, 'Abd al-Jalil
 215
 Rezvān 415
 Rubāhi: Abu'l-Qāsem-e Rubāhi
 Šābandi, K^Vāja-ye 'Erāq 570
 Šabbu'i (old man) 258, 259
 Sabbu'i, Abu 'Ali 377, 378
 Sābet 398
 Šābuni: Abu Bakr
 Šābuni: Esmā'il
 Šā'ed (Qāzi) 146, 148-152, 188,
 189, 326
 Šāfe'i-ye Moṭṭalebi 82, 83, 86,
 87, 147
 Sahl b. 'Abdollāh 310, 372
 Sa'id (butcher) 287
 Sa'idat al-Šufiya 484
 Šakr-e Jenni 461
 Sam'āni: Abu Sa'd
 Sam'āni: Moḥammad
 Sam'āni: Moṣaffar
 Šāmi: Abu'l-Faḏl
 Šan'āni, 'Abd al-Razzāq 377
 Šandali, 'Ali 326, 410, 411
 Sangāni, K^Vājagak 331
 Sanjar b. Malekšāh 536, 537,
 560, 570
 Sanjāri: Abu'l-Ḥasan
 Šaqqāni: Abu'l-'Abbās
 Sari-ye Saqaṭi 100, 122, 376,
 379
 Satan (Eblis) 167, 200, 297, 307,
 383, 416, 441, 454, 464, 488,
 500
 Šāyena 419, 420
 Sayyed-e Ajall (Ḥasan) 329,
 330, 336-338
 Sayyed Moḥammad-e 'Alavi:
 Moḥammad, Amir Sayyed
 Šebli: Abu Bakr
 Senji: Abu 'Ali-ye Senji
 Šervāni: Abu Našr-e Šervāni
 Seyf al-Dowla, Ebrāhim:
 Ebrāhim Ināl
 Seyfi (Qāzi) 274-276
 Šeyk al-Eslām: Abu Sa'd
 Šeyk al-Eslām: Anšāri
 Shaikh Morid 263
 So'dā 175
 Sofyān-e Šowri 380
 Solami: Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān
 Solami: Abu 'Amr b. Nojeyd
 Solomon (Soleymān the
 prophet) 71, 385, 386, 461,
 472
 Šo'luki: Abu Sahl

Šowkāni: Abu'l-‘Abbās
Šowkāni: Aḥmad-e Mālekān-e
Šowkāni
Šowkāni: ‘Omar-e Šowkāni
Šowkāni: Moḥammad-e
Šowkāni
Suri (sultan) 216, 255, 257
Ṭabari: Moḥammad b.
‘Abdollāh-e Ṭabari
Ṭāḡut 428
Ṭāher b. Sa‘id: Abu'l-Faṭḥ
Ṭalḥa b. Yusof al-‘Aṭṭār 404
Ṭarsusi: Abu ‘Ali
Ṭarsusi: ‘Ali
Ṭoḡrel 204, 205, 206, 255, 257,
352, 497
Ṭusi: Abu ‘Ali
Ṭusi: ‘Ezz al-Din Maḥmud-e
Ilbāši
Ṭusi: Ma‘šūq
Valid 398
Varqāni: Abu Maṣṣur-e
Varqāni
Vāseṭi: Abu Bakr-e Vāseṭi
Yaḥyā (from Transoxania) 249-
251
Yaḥyā (the Turk) 267, 268
Yaḥyā b. Mo‘āz-e Rāzi 371,
392
Yusof b. al-Ḥoseyn 366
Zacharias (Zakariyā) 125, 384,
385
Zahir al-Din As‘ad-e Qoṣeyri
(Emām-e Ajall) 567
Zeyn al-‘Ābedin, ‘Ali b.
Ḥoseyn 100
Zeyn al-Ṭāyefa: ‘Omar-e
Šowkāni
Zohra (slave girl) 373
Zohri 377
Zu'l-Nun the Egyptian 367

PLACE NAMES

Abivard 87, 95, 105, 108, 293,
294, 334, 422, 556, 570
‘Adani Kuyān Street: *passim*
Āmol 108, 117, 123, 140, 141,
400, 424,
Andarmān 109
‘Arafāt 233, 446, 525, 533
Ardiyān 236
Arey 235
Āsatow (Asatow) 87, 348
Asparis 197
Astarābād 588
Azjāh (Ažjāh, Azgāh) 279-282,
292, 339, 390, 507
Bādana 256, 263
Baghdad (Baḡdād) 82, 91, 104,
379, 396, 404, 414, 424, 540,
543, 545, 547
Baḡšur 357
Bāku 318
Balk 115, 271-273, 496
Banu Šeyba Gate (Bāb Bani
Šeyba) 376
Barākuh Cemetery 110
Bašām 233, 236, 238
Bāvard: Abivard
Bāz (village near Ṭus) 133
Beysma 109, 111, 112
Bokhara (Bokārā) 104, 142,
145, 425, 564
Bolḡār 196
Bošanqān: Pošanḡān: Pušanḡ
Boškevān 252, 253
Bost 360
Bušanḡān: Pošanḡān: Pušanḡ
Čāč 511
Caravanserai of Edris 256
Cave of Ḥerā 463
cemetery of Ḥira 194, 356

Index

- China 404
 China Sea 313
 church of the Christians (in Nishapur) 178, 321
 Congregational Mosque in Baghdad 396
 Dāmḡān 233
 Dandānqān-by-Marv 257, 538
 Dar-e ‘Azra 170
 Dar-e Moyun 184
 Darband 241
 Darra-ye Gaz 108
 Darzāb-e Tāru 277
 Darzakiya 356
 Darzāv-e Now Bahār 327
 Door of the Beloved (Dar-e Dust) 299, 300
 Edris' Retreat 94
 Euphrates (Forāt) 545
 Farāva 87
 Ganj-e Rud 215
 Ġātfar 512
 Ġaznin (Ġazni) 147, 263, 264, 272, 532, 540, 541, 553, 554
 Hamadān 206
 Ḥejāz 164, 228, 236, 331, 402
 Ḥejr (in Mecca) 376
 Ḥerā: Cave of Ḥerā
 Herat (Herāt, Heri) 195, 196, 263, 344-347, 495
 Ḥira Gate (Nishapur) 303
 Ḥira: cemetery of Ḥira
 Ḥoseynābād 320
 Iran (Irān) 601
 Iraq (‘Erāq) 206, 207, 255, 315, 352
 Isfahan (Eṣfahān) 173, 280, 554
 Jacob's Kāy 346
 Jājarm 239, 241
 Janāšak 239
 Jarv 94
 Jerusalem (Beyt al-Moqaddas) 424, 558
 Ka‘ba 70, 231, 353, 371, 552
 Kābarān 87, 312, 511, 537, 538, 550, 570, 573
 Kalaf 241
kānaqāh of Abu ‘Abdollāh-e Bāku (in Nishapur) 166
kānaqāh of Abu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami (in Nishapur) 318
kānaqāh of Abu Aḥmad (in Ṭus) 134, 135
kānaqāh of Abu ‘Ali-ye Ṭarsusi (in Nishapur) 138
kānaqāh of Abu ‘Amr-e Boškevāni (in Boškevān-by-Nasā) 253
kānaqāh of Abu'l-Faẓl-e Ḥasan (in Saraks) 273, 566
kānaqāh of Abu'l-Ḥasan-e Karaqāni (in Karaqān) 230, 240
kānaqāh of Abu ‘Osmān-e Ḥiri (in Molqābād, Nishapur) 191
kānaqāh of Abu Nāṣer-e Šervāni (in Šervān) 227
kānaqāh of Ostād Imam Abu'l-Qāsem-e Qoṣeyri (in Nishapur) 157, 208
kānaqāh of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id: *kānaqāh* of ‘Adani Kuyān Street (in Nishapur): *passim*
 Kānaqāh-e ‘Adani Kuyān 474
kānaqāh of Aḥmad-e Maḥmud-e Šufi 832
kānaqāh of ‘Ali-ye Šandali (in Nishapur) 410
 Kānaqāh of Bābu Fala (in Saraks) 566

- kānaqāh of the darvishes (in Raziq-by-Marv) 378
kānaqāh of Joveyni (in Nishapur) 238
kānaqāh of Kālu (in Herat) 345
kānaqāh in the village of Kodā-Šād (in the *velāyat* of Kuruy) 241
Kānaqāh of the Master (in Ṭus) 308
kānaqāh in Mecca 823
kānaqāh of Moḥammad-e Šowkāni (in Šowkān) 276
kānaqāh of Neẓām al-Molk (in Isfahan) 280
kānaqāh of Ostād Imam Qoṣeyri (in Nishapur) 231, 522
kānaqāh in the village of Rafiqān 247
kānaqāh of Sarāvi (by the Barākuh Cemetery in Nasā) 110, 111
kānaqāh of the *šārestān* (in Saraks) 89, 92
Kānaqāh-e Šonduqi (Nishapur) 336
kānaqāh of the Sufis (in Bağšur) 357
kānaqāh of Zahir al-Din As‘ad-e Qoṣeyri (in Nishapur) 568
Kanbār 210
Karaqān 229, 230, 236-238, 240-242, 458
Karv-e Nišābur 185
Karv-e Jabali 328
Kermān 71, 530
Keṭā 570
Ki 229
Khorasan (Korāsān): *passim*
Kodā-Šād 241
Kotan 291, 334, 425
Kowjān 87
Kufa 83, 254, 375
Kuhestān 360
Kuruy 241
 "Little Syria" (*Šām-e Kučak*=*Nasā*)
Lokkām: Mt. Lokkām
Mağz 229
Maqām-e Ebrahim 376
 Market(place) of the Kermanis (in Nishapur) 149, 150, 302, 303
Marv 82, 95, 105, 142, 174, 195, 196, 197, 257, 268, 269, 270, 281, 286, 358, 382, 388, 391, 422, 496, 508, 518, 530, 537, 564, 567
Marv al-Rud (*Marv-e Rud*) 357, 506, 518
Mecca 61, 126, 128, 129, 164, 228, 231, 250, 251, 252, 254, 277, 328, 363, 376, 380, 424, 433, 445, 533, 545, 563, 564
Medina 424, 511, 563
Meyhana: *passim*
Mikalis' Caravanserai (*Sarā-ye Mikāliyān*) 419
Miqāt-e ‘Omra 563
Molqābād 191
Mosque of ‘Āyeša 563
Mosque of the Prophet of God (*Masjed-e Rasul Allāh*) 118
Mosque, Sacred: Sacred Mosque
Moṭarrez Mosque (in Nishapur) 198
Mt. Lokkām 379
Nahāvand 283
Nahravāla 196
Nahravān 544

Index

- Narrow Road (Şerāṭ-e Bārik) 411
 Nasā 77, 87, 108-112 253, 334, 562
 Nāvsār Street 390
 quarter of the Sufis (in Meyhana) 578
 Nishapur (Nišābur): *passim*
 Nowqān 203, 247 266, 298, 420 502
 Nur-e Bokārā 255
 Nušābād 236
 Oḥod 102
 Pārs 221
 Pošangān: Pušangān: Pušang
 Pušang (-by-Herat) 183, 251, 405
 Qāyen 341, 342
 Rafiqān 247, 277, 279
 Raziq 378
 Realm of Warfare (Dār al-Ḥarb) 416
 Rebāṭ of ‘Abdollāh-e Mobārak 268, 269, 358
 Rebāṭ of Burjā 340
 Rebāṭ of the Cemetery 95
 Rebāṭ-e Kohan 94, 97, 556
 Rebāṭ of Sar Bālā 570
 Rebāṭ of Sar Kolah 95
 retreat of Ebrāhim-e Adham 301
 Rey: Arey
 Rikā 344
 the River (Āmu Daryā, Oxus) 291
 Roof Gutter 376
 Rudbār Gate (Ṭus) 317
 Rum 225, 391, 416
 Sabzavār 236
 Sacred Mosque in Mecca (Masjed-e Ḥarām) 563
 Safālaqān cemetery (in Ṭus) 569
 Šāh-Meyhana 108
 Šahrestāna 87
 Šalva (-by-Arey) 234
 Samarqand 382, 570
 Šāmeyna 108
 sanctuary of Mecca (Ḥaram) 370
 Saraks 87, 89, 97, 105, 108, 128, 142, 192, 193, 211, 219, 221, 257, 267, 273, 274, 285, 335, 340, 396, 537, 564, 566, 567
 Sardarah Gate 346
 Sardāva 277
 Šārestān (in Saraks) 87, 92
 Sar Kolah 95, 527, 550
 Sarrājān School 208
 Šervān 227, 318
 "the Shaikh's Quarters" (in the Kānaqāh of Sarāvi) 111
 Şonduq-e Sakana 246
 Šowkān 276, 548
 Shaikh's Retreat (Şowma‘a-ye Šeyk) 77
 Street of the Christians 135
 Street of War 334
 Šuknān Gate 243
 synagogue of the Jews: (*konešt-e Jahudān* in Nishapur) 223
 Syria (Šām) 110
 Ṭābarān 133
 Ṭabarestān 139, 207, 291, 310
 Ṭarāz 514
 Ṭāyef 61, 126
 Tažan(-e Bāvard) 255, 257
 Tiyyārān 94
 Ṭoroq 360
 Transoxania (Mā Varā’ al-Nahr) 174, 251, 260, 263, 354, 414, 441
 Turkistan (Torkestān) 360

Asrār al-Towhīd

Ṭus 95, 133-135, 137, 179, 185,
210, 246, 247, 252, 266, 287,
298, 299, 308, 317, 327, 334,
354, 550, 569

Two Brothers (Dow Barādarān)
134

Well-appointed House (Beyt al-
Ma‘mur) 402

Wind's Castle (Dez Bād) 165

Yemen (Yaman) 425

Zandarzan 301

Za‘qal 95, 286

Zardak-e Dāg 272

Zošk 246

Groups

Abdāls 415

‘Alavi 186, 187, 266, 280, 317,
408, 554

Arab (nomad, bedouin) 143,
370, 373, 387

‘arif 434, 435

astrologers 407

atheist (*dahrī*) 361, 362

Basrans 371

Christians 178, 224, 321, 322,
371

Companions of the Porch
(*Aṣḥāb al-ṣoffa*) 75, 493

Companions (of the Prophet)
63, 524

darvishes: *passim*

Followers (those who knew the
Companions of the
Prophet) 482

Followers of Bu ‘Abdollāh-e
Karrāmi 146

the forty men (*čehel mardān*)
185

Friends (*vali, owliyāʾ*) 61-63,
71, 124, 126, 129, 130, 185,
242, 354, 382, 422, 579

ḡolāms 188

Gozz 65, 66, 114, 246, 311, 528,
536, 537, 538, 573, 577

Ḥanafī school of
jurisprudence, Ḥanafites
(*Aṣḥāb al-raʾy*) 146, 147,
190, 554

Houris (Ḥowrā) 415

infidels of *Keṭā* (*koffār-e Keṭā*)
570

inhabitants of *kānaqāhs* 493

Israel, the tribe of, offspring of,
Israelites (Bani Esrāʾīl)
170, 394, 431

Jews (Jahud, Yahud, Yahudi)
223-225, 372, 387, 431, 515

Jinn 97, 449, 524, 525, 534, 561

Karrāmi sect: Karrāmis:

Followers of Bu ‘Abdollāh-
e Karrāmi

the two *kʿājas* 530

kiyā 213, 214

Kurd 198

Malāmati 436

Meccans 371

Moʿtazelites 87

pirs: *passim*

Pivots (*qoṭb, aqṭāb*) 64, 530,
555

qalandar 153

qāzi: *passim*

rāfezi: Shiite

Rightly Guided Caliphs
(*Kolafā-ye rāšedin*) 86

Šāfeʿī(-*mazhab*, school of
law, jurisprudence) 82, 86,
147, 326

Saljuqs (*āl-e Saljuq*) 255, 257

Index

- Seven Sleepers (*Aṣḥāb-e kaḥf*) 459
shaikhs: *passim*
Shiite (*rāfezi*, *ravāfez*) 146, 177
Sufis: *passim*
Ten Companions of the Prophet 539, 540
Tent Pegs (*owtād*) 64
Torkomāns 143, 259, 272, 273, 327, 328
Turks 189, 198, 288, 359
Two Angels 446, 501
Two Envoys (angels) 205
two scribes (angels) 501
wise madmen (*‘oqalā-ye majānin*): see Loqmān and Ma‘ṣuq
Zoroastrian (*gabr*) 199, 201, 202
- Jamāl al-Din Abu Rowḥ 67
Kalila and Demna 369
Preserved Tablet (*lowḥ al-maḥfuḏ*) 188
Psalms of David (*Zabur*) 362, 435
Qor’ān: *passim*
Ṣaḥiḥ (by Bokāri) 290, 377
Tafsir-e Ḥaqā’eq (by Abu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami) 113
Torah (*Turāt*) 361, 362, 365, 435, 515

Books

- The Secrets of True Monotheism or the Mystic Stations of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id* (*Asrār al-towḥid fi maqāmāt al-šeyk Abi Sa‘id*) 69
Classes of Female Recluses (*Ṭabaqāt-e Nāsekāt* by Solami) 484
The Classes of the Leading Sufis (*Ṭabaqāt A‘emat al-Ṣufiya* by Abu ‘Abd al-Raḥmān-e Solami) 112
Eṣārāt (by Avicenna) 302
Gospel (*Enjil*) 361, 362, 435
The Mystic States and Sayings of Our Shaikh (*Ḥālāt o soḡanān-e šeyk-e mā*) by

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